

Obs. 141

THE
POEMS OF OSSIAN



THE
POEMS OF OSSIAN

LITERALLY TRANSLATED FROM THE GAELIC,
IN THE ORIGINAL MEASURE OF VERSE

BY

PETER M'NAUGHTON

GRANDTULLY

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLXXXVII



TO

JOHN STUART BLACKIE, Esq.

EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

THIS TRANSLATION OF THE POEMS OF OSSIAN

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

AS A TOKEN OF ESTEEM FOR HIS SERVICES

TO THE GAEL AND HIS LANGUAGE.

P R E F A C E.

WITH three translations of Ossian—those of Macpherson, Macgregor, and Clerk—already before the public, it may be asked what necessity for a new translation existed, especially as the Gaelic of some of the minor poems translated by Macpherson has been lost, and cannot now be made use of. To this question my reply is, that Macpherson's translation, without being strictly literal, is in prose, which does not preserve the measure of Ossian's verse—a great want to one conversant with the Gaelic.

Macgregor's and Clerk's translations are more literal than that of Macpherson, but neither of them attempts to preserve the rhythmic cadence of the Gaelic.

Ever since I familiarised myself with the Gaelic version, I have been convinced of its

vast superiority to any version of the poems rendered in English.

Thus satisfied that they were the originals, I felt a strong desire to give them in the measure in which they came from their author, Ossian. Before Dr Clerk's translation—the latest—appeared, I was far on with mine, and did not see any cause to desist from my work, seeing that I was rendering them literally as to meaning, while at the same time preserving the original measure of verse.

The self-imposed task of sustaining, in some degree, the afflatus of Ossian, of translating him literally and preserving his measure, has been an arduous one ; and were it not that I was greatly encouraged by many enthusiastic admirers of Ossian to persevere, the probability is that I would have abandoned the undertaking before it was completed.

Every one must be aware of the bitter controversy that has so long raged regarding the authenticity of the poems.

It is not my intention to revive that controversy here, though I may say that the personality of Ossian, as being their author, is as inseparably interwoven with the composition of the poems as is that of Burns with his, even when he writes—

“Count on a friend, in faith and practice,
In ROBERT BURNS.”

Thus :—

“ Son of Alpine, strike thou the strings,
Rouse his soul in the mighty bard ;
Lora’s murmurs have from me borne
The assemblage of tales that were ;
Standing amid the clouds of years,
Few their openings and dim the past ;
When the insight comes that would shape them,
It but faintly perceives the time.
Let me hear thee, thou harp from Selma,
My spirit to song shall return.”

Deeply impressed with the transcendent literary beauty of the poems,—with their vivid and faithful portraiture of nature—their great historic value in throwing much light on the relation subsisting between the Irish, the Caledonians, and the Danes at an early period,—and wishing to give them in a cheap form so as to be accessible to every one, I now have pleasure in submitting them to the public, in the hope that I have not laboured in vain.

PETER M’NAUGHTON.

GRANDTULLY,
June 1887.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CATH-LODUINN	1
CAOMH-MHALA	26
CARRAIG-THURA	36
CARTHONN	56
OIGH-NAM-MOR-SHUL	68
GAOL-NAN-DAOINE	74
CROMA	80
CALTHONN AND CAOLMHAL	88
FIONNGAL	99
TIGHMORA	208
CONLAOCH AND CUTHONNA	348

CATH-LODUINN.

DUAN I.

A TALE this of the time of old.

Gentle breeze for ever unseen,
Bending thistles by Lora of storms,
On thy course in the glen of wind,
Why so quick hast thou left mine ear ? 5
I hear no call of high hoar streams,
Nor harp's voice from the rock of shrubs.
Come, Malmhina of strings, to thy bard,
Turn the soul of thy bard again ;
Turn my soul, thou Fair-hand, to me. 10

Looking upon Lochlin of braves,
On Uthorno's dark water of waves ;
From the west sea descends my king,
From a wild sea striving with wind.
The sons of the mountains are few 15
In the midst of a foreign land.
Starno called an idler from Loduinn,
To bid Fionngal to feast and cheer.

The king remembered the sweet maid,
Wrath guided his hand to his spear. 20

“Starno I will not see, nor Gorm-meall ;
Death is floating like a dark shadow
In the soul of the cruel chief.
I'll not leave the beam from the east,
The white-handed maid of high praise. 25
From my presence quick, son of Loduinn !
His words are to me like the wind,
That lifts and abandons the bough
In a dark glen of black still clouds.”

“Son of Roinn', Dubh, of death-arms keen ; 30
Cromaglas, hardy man of shields ;
Sruthmor, whose abode has aye been
In the dusky garment of battle ;
Cormar, whose vessel was the tightest
When cutting her path through the waves, 35
Reckless as the lightning of heaven
Through the jagged rifts of the clouds,—
Rise quickly, ye children of heroes,
In a foreign land girt by waves.
Let each man look well to his shield, 40
Like Treunmor, the ruler of battles :
Thou that dwellest among the harps,
Spotted shield, descend to my hand ;
Repel this great stream from my side,
Or beside me dwell low in earth.” 45

Round the king quickly rose stern heroes ;
They all seized with ardour their spears ;
Their eyes flashed—they uttered no words ;
Their souls in the heroes rose high.

The clang of swords was heard on shields ; 50
They all took the hill in their march ;
The men stood in the twilight shade,
On the dusky ridges of night,
Raising snatches of quiet song
On the freshening breeze of the hills. 55
Full and slow the moon was on waves.
Dubh, the son of Roinn', chief of heroes,
Mighty hunter of the dun boars,
In grey mail will come from the steep.
The man's delight was the brown craft 60
Rising up on the sea of ships,
When Cromthormod would wake the wood.
In a land of deceit and foes,
No fear was in the soul of Duir.

“Son of Cumhal, shall I stretch my steps 65
Through the night ? from the dented shield
Shall I look on our foemen all,
In silence under heaven's gloom,
Round the stern cruel king of Lochlin,
And fierce Suaran, the foe of strangers, 70
Yonder pouring their chant together,
To Loduinn's stone of spectres cold ?
Not in vain are their solemn words
To Loduinn of the mighty Galls.

“But, chief, should Roinn's son not return, 75
His modest wife must walk alone,
Where meet the great streams of the hills,
That from Cruailinn are pouring down.
On each side are mountains and rocks,
Ocean's roar, high peaks, and green woods. 80

My son's eye is on ocean's birds ;
 He lone strays 'mong the hills in youth.
 Give the chief of men the boar's head ;
 Tell him that not small was my joy
 When came the brown strength of the hills 85
 On the boar's blue spear in Uthorno ;
 Tell him of my deeds in the strife ;
 Tell him above all how I fell."

“ Not forgetful of my brave sires
 Have I come myself o'er the strait ; 90
 Danger's time was their time for blows ;
 Helpless they were not in old age.
 The evil dark shades do not close
 Heavily round my youthful locks.
 Chief of Cramo of rocky hills,
 The night is mine, and mine the danger.” 95

The king instantly stretched his steps
 Over Turthor's cold roaring stream,
 That sent down a deafening great sound.
 Gorm-meall's base was in grey mist, 100
 The moon was on the face of rocks ;
 'Mongst them was a form of bright hue—
 A fair form of dark curling locks,
 Lochlin's white-bosomed maid from waves.
 Her footsteps were many and short,
 Her sweet strain broke forth on the wind, 105
 Her white arms unavailing rose ;
 There was grief in her troubled soul.

“ Torecultorno of the grey locks,
 Are the steps of thy foot round Lula ? 110
 Is thy fire-beam like embers dying

By a stream rushing past in gloom ?
 Where now dost thou make thy abode,
 Father of the dark-haired pale maid ?

I see the chief of roaring Lula 115

At feasts round the dark form of Loduinn,
 When the night closes round the sky.

With large shield thou hidest the moon ;

I have seen her darkling and brown ;

In thy locks was the fire of waves ; 120

Floating from me like sailing ships

Is the dauntless king of dun boars.

Why forgets the hero my fears ?

Look thou down from the hall of Loduinn

On a maid in grief and alone." 125

“ Who art thou of sweet voice in gloom ? ”

She had turned her back on the chief ;

“ Who art thou at night under care ? ”

She leaned close to the cave of waves ;

The king loosed the thong from her hand, 130

And kindly inquired for her sires.

“ Torcultorno,” replied the maid,

“ Abode at Lula of great streams ;

His home was at Lula of heroes :

The rare shell is now in his hand

In the grimly-browed hall of Loduinn.

He and Starno of the ships met

In contention among the hills ;

The dark-eyed brown chiefs wrestled long ;

My father, the brave, fell in pain,

Torcultorno of the blue shield.

“ On the side of the rock at Lula

A fleet roebuck fell by my arrow.
 Half gladdened, as gathered my hand
 My ringlets astray on the wind, 145
 Noise was heard : my eyes opened wide ;
 My sensitive bosom heaved high ;
 My steps were to Lula of strength,
 To Torcul of ocean and rocks.

“ Who was it but Starno the king, 150
 With his red eye implying love !
 But his black brow was stern and frowning,
 His laugh was disordered through joy.
 Where is my father who was great,
 The chief of hills, the brave in battle ? 155
 Forsaken among foes is the maid,
 The child of Torcul of smooth sails !
 He seized my hand and spread the sail ;
 I was placed in a darksome cave ;
 He approached at times like a mist, 160
 Near me raising my father’s shield.
 A youthful beam at times passed by
 The blind wretched door of the cave ;
 Starno’s son, the ranger of hills ;
 My soul is in love with the youth.” 165

“ Thou white-handed daughter of Lula,”
 Said Fionngal, “ thou maiden of grief,
 A cloud mingled with fire is floating
 On thy soul, thou loved of the brave.
 Look not thou on the moon robed red, 170
 Nor on fire from the sky on waves ;
 Round thee is the steel of the brave,
 Causing fear, thou fair, in thy foes.

It is not the steel of the weak,
Nor are theirs the wry souls of cowards. 175
No maid shall wail in the sword's hall,
Nor in loneliness raise her white arms ;
She is lovely in her rich locks,
Striking the harp of chiefs in Selma ;
Her voice will not wail on the hill, 180
For we soften aye under song."

Without pause the king stretched his steps
Through the darkness of murky hills ; 185
He at once found the tree of Loduinn
Bending heavily under a blast ;
Three stones with moss hoary were there,
With a rushing stream by their side ;
Above them, in fire going out, 190
Was Cruth Loduinn in wind and mist.
From above a spectre looked forth,
Half composed of vapour and smoke ;
While a strained broken voice was heard,
And sound of streams pouring from heights. 195
By a leafless oak in the heath,
His talk to cruel chiefs was heard,
To Suaran and merciless Starno,
Evil foes alike unto strangers.
They leaned upon their dark-brown shields, 200
With spears firmly grasped in their hands.
The wind roared round Starno of ships,
While fell his dark hair round his head.
The sound of his steps struck their ears ;

They at once rose up in their arms. 205
 "Fell the wanderer of night, Suaran!"
 Shouted Starno in his great wrath;
 "Grasp thy father's shield in thy hand,
 It is hard as the rock of caves."

Suaran instantly threw his spear; 210
 It stuck quivering in Loduinn's tree.
 At each other the heroes rushed,
 With their swords contending in battle;
 When steel was heard grating on steel,
 When helmets resounded and mails; 215
 The son of Luinn cut the gay thongs;
 The spotted shield fell on the earth;
 The king stayed his arm raised on high,
 At seeing brave Suaran unarmed;
 Whose wild eyeballs turned in his head, 220
 As he threw his sword on the ground;
 He withdrew his steps from the heath,
 Low-stifling a tune in his breast.

Nor unseen by his sire was Suaran; 225
 Starno turned his head from the knoll,
 While his black brow heavily lowered
 O'er his haughty vindictive face.
 He struck Loduinn's tree with his spear,
 Stretched his footsteps and took the moss.
 To Lochlin of blue swords returned 230
 Each man by a way of his own,
 Like two streams descending in foam
 From two glens, and rain on the mount.
 Towards Turthor the king returned;
 A bright beam arose from the east; 235

In his hand, in the skirts of night,
 Shone the arms of wave-circled Lochlin.
 Bright also from the rock of caves
 Came Toreul's daughter of sweet grace,
 Gathering from the wind her locks, 240
 And raising her voice sweet as harps,
 The voice of Lulan of free shells,
 The biding hall of noble chiefs.

She saw Starno's arms in his hand ;
 Joy kindled in the maiden's soul ; 245
 She saw Suaran's shield by his side,
 And turned from the leader of hosts.
 "Hast thou fallen by thy hundred streams,
 Loved of maid of a hundred woes ?"

Uthorno that dost rise from ocean, 250
 The night's lightning is on thy side ;
 I see the moon doleful and brown,
 Among the waves behind thy wood ;
 On thy top is Loduinn in clouds,
 Heroes who fell of old's great house. 255

At the end of the hall is seen
 Loduinn's spirit of the blue arms ;
 He is seen like a shade in mist ;
 His right hand on a thing like a shield ;
 His left upon the ample shell, 260
 The shell of comfort to great chiefs.
 In the hall of ghastly-hued ghosts,
 The place of wave-lightning was seen.

Lochlin's race behind him convened,
 Youthful chiefs, and heroes of old. 265
 He handed round the fragrant shell

To those that would march unto battle;
Between him and the cowards rose
The spotted shield, dented and brown,
Like the darkening moon in the sky, 270
Or a meteor cast on a knoll.
Like a rainbow on a hill's face
Came the maiden of brightest look.

CATH-LODUINN.

DUAN II.

“ WHERE now is the hero of chiefs ? ”

Said Roinne’s son, Dubh of brown shield.

“ What cloud on the mountain conceals
The young beam from Selma of waves ?

Is yon the king coming I see,

5

From the hill under wing of night ?

Morning is on Toirne of waves,

The sun is on the height in mist.

In my presence raise up the shield,

Great heroes of departed chiefs ;

10

He’ll not fall like fire on the hill,

Of which part is seen dark on earth.

Yon is he like an eagle of heaven,

Descending from the mount in wind ;

In his hand are the spoils of foes.

15

My spirit was, king, under grief.”

“ But our foemen are drawing near,
Like waves coming over in mist,

When their crests are seen amid foam,
Over thick-lying smoke and haze. 20

The traveller going shall quake,
Not knowing which way is the right."

"Like traveller, we shall not quake ;
Mighty heroes, unsheathe your steel.
Shall my sword be raised on the mount, 25
Or be left to yourselves the triumph ?"

"The doings of the past," said Dubh,
"To-day reappear to my eye ;
For Treunmor of the broadest shield
Is seen among chiefs that have been. 30
The soul of the king was not weak,
In his thoughts there never was fear.

From their hundred great streams in heath,
Hosts met in the deep glen of Cona ;
The chief was on the hill beside them. 35
To the conflict who will go down ?
They drew forth to a half their swords ;
In each head was a red wroth eye ;
Every man, apart in the wood,
Was stifling a song in his breast. 40

To each other why should they yield ?
Co-equal in might were their sires.

With great spear on the hill was Treunmor ;
Handsome, in his locks, was the youth ;
He observed in motion the foe, 45
And his spirit was dark with grief.
He besought every dauntless hero
In his turn to conduct the strife.
They advanced, but returned with loss

From the foe and the hill of conflict. 50
 From his own grey moss-covered rock
 Hastened Treunmor of the blue shield ;
 He rushed fully into the conflict,
 And the foe succumbed in the strife.
 Round the chief on the hill of battle 55
 The heroes convened with great joy.
 Like a pleasant breeze on the moors
 Was the kind voice of power from Selma.
 The chiefs by themselves fought the battle,
 Till the moment of danger rose, 60
 And that was the time for the king
 The struggle to end with his steel."

"To ourselves it was not unknown,"
 Said Cromaglas of the sharp arms,
 "That our mountain sires sank in dust. 65
 Who now on the hill will give battle,
 And the king of high mountains gone ?
 Mist is round on many a knoll ;
 On each let a chief strike his shield ;
 From the gloom a spirit will come 70
 That shall teach the leader to fight."

Every chief went and took his knoll ;
 The bards of song noted the chiefs.
 Louder than the war-note of heroes
 Was the clanging from Dubh's dark boss 75
 When raising in battle his shield.

Like great roarings from distant streams
 The children of Toirne came over ;
 Starno was in the front of battle,
 And Suaran from the isle of storms. 80

Every warrior looked on his shield,
 Like a dark wraith at Loduinn's stone,
 When he looks from behind the moon,
 Darkening 'neath a load in the sky,
 While ghost - lightning shoots through the
 night. 85

At Turthor the warriors met,
 Like vexed billows on ocean's brow ;
 Loud blows on each other fell close ;
 On the hill death leapt o'er the brave,
 Like a cloud of terrible hailstones, 90
 When great wind in its skirt is rising—
 When the blast like thunder rolls on,
 And dark ocean in turmoil roars.

Strife of Toirne of deepest gloom,
 Why should I in song put thy scars ? 95
 Thou'rt now in the time that has been,
 To my sight thou'rt of colour void.
 Fierce Starno came over with battle,
 And great Suaran in the strife's wing.
 Thy sword in the strife was not weak, 100
 Dubh, thou son of Roinn' from the north.
 Lochlin across the water fled ;
 The chiefs of the sword lost their thoughts,
 While slowly they turned their big eyes,
 As their people fled from the hill. 105
 Fionngal's horn was heard on the height ;
 Alba's race dropped pursuit in the glen.
 Many beside Turthor of waves
 Were the braves who fell by the sword.
 "Chief of Crathmo," remarked the king, 110

“Son of Roinne, hunter of boars,
 Unhurt thou’rt not come from the strife,
 Like strong eagle from the hill rushing.
 Gentle Lanshui of the white breast
 Shall be joyful at her own stream, 115
 With Ceann-daoine, thy beloved young son,
 Straying beneath the mount at Crathmo.”

“Culgorm was,” the hero replied,
 “The first that came over to Alba,
 O’er the curving glens of the deep— 120
 Culgorm, the dark rider of waves.
 By the chief’s hand his brother fell ;
 He left empty his distant hall ;
 He abode in Cruailinn of heath,
 ’Mid the stillness of lonely hills. 125
 His descendants came out in time
 To frequent contendings in war ;
 They fell in the conflicts with arms ;
 By me were the wounds of brave sires,
 King of the sounding rocky isle.” 130
 He drew out of his side the arrow ;
 The hero fell pale on the earth ;
 His spirit took flight to his fathers,
 In the naked isle of great storms,
 To pursue phantom boars of mist, 135
 On the wings of high mountain winds.
 The heroes stood silent around,
 Like Loduinn’s stone of wraiths on the hill,
 When the traveller sees them on high,
 From his path through the grey of eve, 140
 And takes them for shades of the aged

Setting up the trophies of war.

The night settled down on brown Toirne ;
They stood round the hero in grief.

The breeze was by turn in the locks 145
Of the assemblage of great chiefs—

When slowly broke forth from the king
The thoughts that were deep in his breast ;
He called Ullin of harps and song ;
He asked praise of the chief to rise. 150

“Like no fire gone down without flame,
That flashes and forsakes the eye ;
Like no lightning lost in the sky,
Went he that was valiant to death.

The hero resembled the sun, 155
That long rests on a mountain ridge,
Calling back his sires that were great,
From their place in times that have been.”

“Isle of Toirne,” the bard began,
“That dost rise aloft amid waves, 160

I see thy head over in gloom,
Among mist that on ocean floats ;
From thy glens the leaders come forth
Like true eagles of mighty wings,
The children of darkly-mailed Culgorm, 165
Now in Loduinn, the sky’s grey hall.”

In high Toirne, the isle of winds,
Rises Lurthan of streams and rocks ;
Its grey top without wood, and bald,
And lone moss in its narrow glen. 170

At Curtho’s fount of sounding flow
Dwelt Rurmar, the hunter of boars ;

His daughter was like a mild beam,
Stri-nan-daoin' of the white breast.

Many a great king of great chiefs, 175
Many a chief under brown shields,
Many a youth under heavy locks,
Sought the hall of Rurmar of ships ;
Came to tender love to the maid ;
Came to Toirne's wild rugged slope, 180
And the fair to whom people bowed.
She looked frequently down from her steps,
Stri-nan-daoin' of the high breast.
If her movements were on the heath,
Whiter than cana was her form ; 185
If on the shore of idle waves,
Than foam upon the flowing tide.
Her beaming eyes were like two stars ;
Like the bow of the sky in showers
Was her lovely face, under locks 190
That were blacker than clouds in wind.
Her abode was the hearts of heroes,
Stri-nan-daoin' of the softest hand.

Culgorm landed in his own ship,
And Corcul-suran, the kind hero— 195
Two brothers from Toirne of streams ;
They sought the beam of a hundred chiefs.
She saw in their steel the heroes ;
Her spirit was in love with Culgorm.
From the waves looked Lochlin's mild star 200
On the lovely maid of pure breast,
When she raised up her soft white hand,
Stri-nan-daoin' of the bluest eye.

The brothers in their anger frowned,
As their eyes met in silent gaze ; 205
From each other the warriors turned,
Then threw down their shields on the ground,
While trembling each hand grasped the sword ;
They joined in the conflict of heroes
For Stri-nan-daoin' of the long locks. 210

Corcul-suran fell in his blood,
In the island of floods and cairns.
His sire sent young Culgorm to sea,
Far away from Toirne of boars.
Wandering like the shifting wind 215
On far-stretching Cruailinn of heath,
The stern victor made his abode.
Nor alone did the hero dwell ;
By his side was the beaming fair,
The daughter of high-sounding Toirne, 220
Stri-nan-daoine of the smooth cheek.

CATH-LODUINN.

DUAN III.

WHENCE issued the things that have been ?
When shall closed be the passing time ?
Where shall Time its two ends conceal ?
In mist that is settled and deep—
Its sides marked with the deeds of heroes. — 5
My sight is on the ages gone ;
Seen but dimly is what hath been,
Like the feeble rays of the moon
Slanting on a pool in a glen.
Here they rise in lightning of battle ; 10
There in weakness dwell without joy,
Together they stamp not their deeds
Upon Time that after them moves.
Thou that dwellest among the shields,
That dost raise souls of chiefs from grief— 15
Thou sweet harp from Cona of storms,
From the wall come down to my side ;
Come, delay not, with thy three voices

Quickly brightening all that have been;
 Raise the forms of chiefs that were brave, 20
 In the shadowy time that is gone.

Toirne of mountains and of storms,
 I see high on thy side my kin;
 Fionngal is leaning under gloom,
 O'er the grave of Roinne's brave son. 25

Near him are the footsteps of chiefs,
 Mighty hunters of great dun boars.

At Turthor there lay in the heath,
 In mist, Lochlin's king and his heroes.

The two kings, in wrath, on two hills, 30
 Were looking across o'er their shields;
 Their look was on the stars of night,
 Moving in brightness to the west.

From above leaned the form of Loduinn,
 Like a fire half lost in the clouds, 35
 While a spectre sent forth the wind,
 With side-lightning forerunning death.
 Starno saw with foresight unerring
 That the chief would not yield in battle.

Three times he struck the tree in wrath; 40
 He went without ruth to his son,
 Low-humming to himself a tune,
 And hearing strong wind in his locks.
 From each other the heroes turned,
 Like two stately oaks on the mount, 45
 When each of them yields to the wind,
 Bending from the hill o'er a stream,
 And swaying beyond their great boughs,
 Under blasts that roar through the glen.

“Annir,” said the king of dark lakes, 50
 “Was like fire that went down of old ;
 For he poured forth death from his eyes
 In the waging of war with shields ;
 His delight was the death of heroes ;
 Blood was sweet as a summer stream, 55
 When it brings from a high slant rock
 Great gladness to a mossy glen.
 From Luth-cormo he issued forth,
 To meet Corman, the mighty hero,
 Him who came from Urlor of streams, 60
 To abide 'neath the shield of war.

“Corman came in his dark-brown ship
 To Gorm-meall, surrounded by waves ;
 He saw the daughter of stern Annir,
 Guileless Fiona of the white hands 65
 He saw ; nor indifferent her eye
 To the seaman of dark-blue paths.
 She hied to his ship in the night,
 Like the moon flashing through a glen.
 To great ocean Annir betook him ; 70
 He called a strong wind to his sails,
 Nor alone did the hero go ;
 By his side was Starno, his son,
 Like Torno's eagle of young wing ;
 On the chieftain I turned my eye. 75

“We at length came to roaring Urlor.
 With his men moved Corman the brave ;
 We attacked, but the foe prevailed.
 My father stood wroth in his steel ;
 He cut down the boughs with his sword, 80

Hacking them in his boundless rage ;
Ferocious and red were his eyes ;
I perfectly through saw his soul,
And rushing through the gloom of night,
A hard helmet raised off the field,
And a shield all battered with blows ;
Then sought in the distance the foe,
With a pointless spear in my hand.

“On a rock sat Corman the brave, While in front of him blazed an oak ; Beneath a tree, not distant far, Was good Fiona of gentle eyes. I near her threw the broken shield, And deceivingly spoke of peace.	90
‘By the side of the sounding sea Annir, the warrior, is lying ; The king fell defeated in strife, And Starno is raising his grave. He sent me from Loduinn across To charming White-hand of calm eyes,	95
To ask for her father her locks, To be laid with the chief in dust. And thou, king of Urlor of glens, Stay the strife and lay by the sword,	100
Till he gets the generous shell	105
From the dark-red hand of Cruth Loduinn.’	

"The maid rose in tears on the heath,
From her ringlets she drew a lock
That was straying on her white breast
In the slow-moving gentle breeze. 110
Corman put the shell in my hand ;

With gladness he sought my abode.
Close by him I lay on the hill,
With my face beneath a dark helmet.

Beyond me sleep fell on the foe ;

115

Like a spectre, slowly I rose ;

Great Corman I struck in the side.

‘Thy death, Fiona, is on my sword,
Thy breast was in blood on the heath.

Why, daughter of chiefs that have been,
Didst thou wake up thy brother’s wrath ?’

Evening passed, and the morning rose
Like vapour that floats on the mount ;

Annir sounded the bossy shield,

And shouted for his swarthy son.

125

I came over covered with blood ;

Three times rose the warrior’s voice,
Breaking forth like a squall of wind
From a cloud on the hill at night.

Three days the rejoicing went on ;

130

We laid not the dead in their graves.

We called on the hawks of the sky,
And they came upon all the winds
To feast on the corpses of foes.

‘Suaran, Fionngal is on the knoll

135

Alone beneath the dome of night ;

Strike the spear in his side on the mount
And Starno shall have joy like Annir.’”

“Son of Annir,” said generous Suaran,

“None by me shall fall in the dark ;

140

In light I shall move on the hill,

And hawks on the wing shall be near,

Why with guile should a strong man move ?
My sister opposes my steps."

The king quickly flamed up in wrath, 145
While uplifting on high his spear ;
It quivered three times in his hand,
But he shrank from slaying his son.
He suddenly rushed through the night,
For Turthor's stream up at the cave, 150
Into which he put Torecul's daughter,
And in which he left his hard steel.
He called the maid of Lula's chiefs ;
But she was in the clouds with Loduinn.

Rage swelled in the warrior's soul ; 155
He bent o'er the moor towards Fionngal,
Who lay on his shield in the heath,
Alone, without thinking of strife,
Fierce hunter of the dusky boars.
'Tis not White-hand of locks that's near ; 160
Nor boy upon ferns in the heath,
Beside Turthor's high-sounding stream :
Here itself is the home of heroes,
That shall rise to smite unto death.
Hunter of dun boars on the mount, 165
Rouse no ogre—keep far away.

But Starno loud-trampling came o'er ;
Fionngal rose in arms on the wold.
"Who art thou, son of night, in the glen ?"
He threw in a moment his spear ; 170
They joined in the conflict as one ;
'Neath the sword the shield fell to earth—
It was cleft on the side of Starno,

Who was tied to an oak close by.
When Fionngal saw the king of ships, 175
He sadly turned away his eyes ;
His thoughts were of days which had been,
When, like the music of sweet song,
Moved the maiden of fairest breast ;
He loosened the thongs from his hands. 180
“Son of Annir of arms, begone !
Take Gorm-meall of shells in thy course ;
The radiance that has been is rising ;
I remember the maid of white breast ;
King of bloodiest sword, begone ! 185
Betake thee to thy stormy hall ;
Bad foe of my love, leave my presence !
May the stranger never come near thee,
Thou that makest thy home in gloom.”
A tale this of the time of old. 190

CAOMH - MHALA.

A DRAMATIC POEM.

THE PERSONS.

FIONNGAL.

CAOMH-MHALA.

DEARSA-GREINE.

HIDEALAN.

MILSHUIL-CHAOMHA.

BARDS.

DEARSA-GREINE.

THE chase o'er, no sound is on Ardbheinn,
Save the roaring of streams from rocks.
Thou white-handed daughter of Morni,
Come over from the banks of Crona;
Let the night come also with song;
Joy shall be on the heights of Morbheinn.

5

MILSHUIL-CHAOMHA.

The night it is, maid of blue eye,
Dusky night from behind the hills.
I have seen a stag on the mount,
At the slow-moving stream of Crona;
He looked like a cliff in the shade,
And quickly leaped down through the glen;

10

Round his antlers was the night lightning,
 Seen flashing on the sides of hills ;
 The semblance of those that were, shone 15
 Half seen upon Crona of clouds.

DEARSA-GREINE.

The spectre of death it has been ;
 The king of arms has fallen in battle.
 Rise, Caomh-mhal', on the mountain rise ;
 Caracul has gained in the strife ; 20
 Rise, daughter of Sarno in tears ;
 Thy young lover the brave has fallen ;
 His wraith shall be seen on the mount.

MILSHUIL-CHAOMHA.

Yonder Caomh-mhal' sat all alone,
 With two slender dogs of grey hair, 25
 That sniffed up the breeze of the hill,
 With frequency shaking their ears.
 Her cheek is on her lovely hand,
 In her locks is the mountain wind ;
 Her blue eye attentively watches 30
 The spot where her chief vowed to come.
 Where can Fionngal, my lover, be,
 And night closing darkly around ?

CAOMH-MHALA.

O Caruinn, O Caruinn of floods !
 Why see I thy water in blood ? 35
 I hear no sound of strife, nor voice
 At thy rocks, or thy winding stream.

Has the brave king of Morbheinn slept ?
 Arise, thou daughter of the night,
 Look down from the clouds of the sky— 40
 Quickly rise, till in light I see
 The faint gleam from his mail and steel,
 Where he said he'd come from pursuit ;
 And thou too, green meteor of death,
 That wast a light to our dead sires 45
 In the darkness and mist of night—
 Come thou in thy brightness from Ardbheinn,
 And show me my hero in light,
 Lying on the field, and I weeping.
 Who shall stand between me and grief ? 50
 Between me and my foe's design ?
 Long shall Caomh-mhal' look through her tears,
 Ere shall seen be her mighty chief
 Home returning among his people,
 Radiant as the morning from clouds, 55
 When the shower has passed from the waves.

HIDEALAN.

Let vapour and gloom lie on Crona ;
 Let them lie upon the king's path,
 Concealing his steps from my eyes ;
 Evermore be the brave forgotten. 60
 Armed chiefs on the plain have no leader ;
 Their steps are not heard round his steel.
 O Caruinn, O Caruinn of floods !
 Wind thou with thy water in blood ;
 The leader of men is in gloom. 65

CAOMH-MHALA.

Who has fallen on Caruinn's banks,
 Darkling son of the chilly night ?
 Was he fair as the snow on hills ?
 Like a rainbow bright on the waves ?
 Were his locks like mist on the mount 70
 Curling bright round peaks in the sun ?
 Was he like the thunder of heaven ?
 Fleet as deer of the great lone glens ?

HIDEALAN.

And why should not I see his love
 As comely she comes from the mount, 75
 With red eye in tears for the chief,
 And bright locks round her placid brow ?
 Arise, thou gentle breeze, arise !
 And raise softly her heavy locks ;
 Let me see her dainty white hand, 80
 And face that is lovely in tears.

CAOMH-MHALA.

Has Cumhal's son fallen on the hill ?
 Has he fallen, thou chief of sad tale ?
 Thou thunder that roll'st on dark moors,
 Thou lightning on fire-wings of heaven, 85
 Caomh-mhal' has no dread of your course,
 Since the chief in darkness has fallen ;
 Tell me, thou man of mournful tale,
 If the hero of shields be lifeless.

HIDEALAN.

His host is dispersed on the mount ; 90
 They shall hear the chief's voice no more.

CAOMH-MHALA.

May trouble be thine on the hill,
 May danger pursue thee, great king.
 May thy steps to the grave be few,
 May one maid behind thee have grief ; 95
 Let her be like Caomh-mhal' in woe,
 Full of tears in her days of youth.
 Wherefore hast thou told that my chief,
 The strong hero, has fallen in battle ?
 I'd hope for him back from the mount ; 100
 I would see him on rock or plain ;
 I'd suppose a tree to be him,
 Returning with spoils from the strife ;
 I would hear his horn in the wind
 That sweeps wild o'er the mountain-side. 105
 I am tearful not to be o'er
 On the bank of slow-winding Caruinn ;
 For then would my tears warmly fall
 On the brow of my chief all pale.

HIDEALAN.

The hero is not on the bank ; 110
 On the heath they're raising his tomb.
 Look, thou moon, from a placid cloud ;
 Let thy light be faint on the hill,

That Fair-hand her lover may see
In the feeble gleam of his mail.

115

CAOMH-MHALA.

Put not, ye makers of the grave,
Put not my beloved one away.
He left me hunting on the hill ;
Unobserved, he went without praise.

“I’ll return with night,” said the chief ; 120
True, with night Morbheinn’s king returned.
Why told’st thou me not, hoary man,
In the darkling cave of the rock,
That the king of shields would be slain ?
Thou sawest the youth in his blood, 125
And told’st not of the grief to Caomh-mhal’.

MILSHUIL-CHAOMHA.

What sound is that up on the mount ?
What is it that shines in the glen ?
Who is coming like a strong stream,
When quiver beneath the full moon 130
Great waters descending from rocks ?

CAOMH-MHALA.

Who is it but the foe of Caomh-mhal’—
Son of the world’s king—and his people !
Shade of Fionn’, on clouds that art floating,
Speed quickly the arrow of Caomh-mhal’ ; 135
Let him fall like a deer on the heath.
’Tis Fionn’ ’mid the wraiths of his people.

Wherefore hast thou come, my beloved,
To scare me with gladness and fear ?

FIONNGAL.

Proclaim aloud, ye lips of song— 140
Proclaim aloud the war at Caruinn !
Caracul and his host have fled
From my sword o'er the moorland height.
His braves were like lightning on moors,
When it robes a spirit of night, 145
As he leans on winds from the west,
And the gloomy forest gleams round.
I yonder hear a pleasant voice,
From the sides of rocks and curved glens.
Is it she, the huntress of Ardbheinn, 150
Mighty Sarno's white-handed daughter ?
Look thou from thy rock, my beloved ;
Let me, Caomh-mhal', hear thy sweet voice.

CAOMH-MHALA.

Lift me to the cave of thy rest,
Young hero, who hast won my love. 155

FIONNGAL.

Come thou to the cave of my rest ;
Storms leave, the sun is on the field.
Come, maid, to the cave of my rest,
Thou huntress of the cold lone hills.

CAOMH-MHALA.

He returns, and his fame returns ; 160
'Tis the hand of my love, my hero !

Behind him let me settle down,
 Till my spirit again return
 From the fear that is floating round.
 Strike the harp, and awake the song,
 Morni's maids of slow-moving eyes. 165

DEARSA-GREINE.

Three deer on the heath fell to Caomh-mhal' ;
 A fire under wind rises high.
 Betake thee to the kind maid's feast,
 King of Morbheinn of rugged hills. 170

FIONNGAL.

Raise a voice, ye children of song,
 On the strife of heroes at Caruinn ;
 Fair-hand of the knolls shall have joy,
 When I see her feast upon Ardbheinn.

THE BARDS.

Flow, Caruinn, flow onward, thou stream ; 175
 With rejoicing to-day roll down,
 For the high-voiced strangers have fled :
 Not seen on the hill is the war-horse ;
 In the far land they spread their wings.
 The sun from clouds in peace will rise, 180
 And night will descend amid joy ;
 The chase will be heard on the hill ;
 The sounding shield will be on the wall ;
 Our strife will be with foes that come
 From the north, from the land of Galls ; 185
 In Lochlin's blood our hands will be red.

Flow, Caruinn, flow onward, thou stream,
 Amid gladness to-day roll down,
 For the high-voiced strangers have fled.

MILSHUIL-CHAOMHA.

Descend from the high land, thou mist ; 190
 Raise, ye moonbeams, the gentle soul
 Of the maiden, whose form was lovely ;
 Now lying at the rock all pale
 Is Caomh-mhala, cold, without life.

FIONNGAL.

Is Sarno's daughter without life, 195
 Fair-hand, whom so greatly I loved ?
 Beneath the darkness meet me, Caomh-mhal',
 In mist, on the heath, when I'm gone,
 When I sit on a mountain stream,
 All alone through the hours of night. 200

HIDEALAN.

Has the sound of the chase left Ardbheinn ?
 Why have I distracted the maid ?
 When in gladness shall I see Fair-hand,
 Where people close in the desert's chase ?

FIONNGAL.

Youth of gloomy nature and mien, 205
 Be not henceforth seen at the feast ;
 Thou'l not raise success on the field,
 Nor aid me with spear in pursuit.
 From my presence, youth of dark hue !

Show me in her sleep the maiden ; 210
 Let me see her whose face was lovely.
 Beside the rock my love is pale,
 The night-wind is cold in her locks ;
 Her bow-string in the breeze is sounding ;
 Her fall on the hill broke her arrow. 215
 Praise the maiden that had no frown,
 Sarno of the lofty hills' daughter ;
 Raise her name on the wind of heaven.

THE BARDS.

See the lightning flash round the maiden !
 The moonbeams raise the gentle soul 220
 Of her that was loved by the people.
 From the clouds that are close around,
 The ghosts of dead heroes are seen ;
 There is Sairn of the dusky brow,
 And Fidealan the chief's red eye. 225
 When shall Fair-hand rise from the knoll ?
 When be heard her voice on the heath ?
 On the hill maids will come to seek her ;
 They'll not find her locks of bright hue.
 In their dreams thou'l't dimly be seen, 230
 Giving peace to their troubled souls.
 Thy voice will be low in their ears ;
 Their thoughts in their sleep will be glad,
 Restoring their love to their minds.
 See the lightning flash round the maiden ! 235
 The moonbeams raise the gentle soul
 Of her that was loved by the people.

CARRAIG-THURA.

HAST thou left the blue deep of the sky,
Guileless son of the golden locks ?

Night's doors to thy setting are free,
And thy place of repose in the west.

The waves will come languidly round
To behold him of stainless face,

Uplifting their heads under fear ;

To see thee so lovely in sleep,

They darkling retired from thy side.

Take repose in thy cave, thou sun,

And return from thy rest with joy.

Let a thousand lights be upraised
To the gentle sound of sweet harps,

Waking joy in the hall of towers ;

To their land conquering king and people

15

Return : Caruinn's strife is far off,

Like a sound to be heard no more.

Let the bards of song raise a tune ;

The great hero returns with fame.

Like these were the words of sweet Ullin

20

When the king returned from the field
With heavy locks in graceful curls.
His blue helm was round the chief's head,
Like light clouds upon the sun's face,
When he moves in his dusky garb,
Showing half his light in the sky.
His brave chiefs were behind the king ;
The feast of free shells was on high.
Fionn', turning to the tuneful band,
Asked a lay from the chief of bards.

“ Ye high-sounding voices of Cona,
Ye bards who converse about age,
By whom rises up on our souls
A great army of blue-mailed heroes,
Sweet to me is the joy of grief, 35
Like the mild dew of gentle spring,
That bends the oak’s boughs on the hill,
When their young tender leaves come forth.
Then upraise ye, my bards, the song ;
To-morrow my ship will set sail ; 40
I’ll steer through the blue glens of waves,
To the rock of heroes and chiefs,
The green home of generous Sarno,
Thy dwelling, Caomh-mhala of locks,
Where Cathul, the chieftain, doth spread 45
The banquet on the hill with pride ;
The dun boars in his woods are rife ;
The wood of storms will hear the chase.

"Cronan, thou son of pleasant songs,
Minfhonn, of light hand on the harp,
Raise the story of brown-haired Silrie ;" 50

To the king of great hills and deserts,
 Let Binn-bheul, who is lovely, come
 Like a rainbow across the glen,
 When it shows its head on the height,
 As the sun goes behind the hills.
 Yonder, king of arms, is the maid,
 Whose voice is feeble under grief."

55

BINN-BHEUL.

My beloved is from mountain sires ;
 A great hunter he of dark hills ;
 His greyhounds at his side are panting,
 His small bow-string sounds in the wind.
 Hast thou sat by the mountain well,
 Or at the upland's ample stream ?
 In the breeze the rushes are bending ;
 The mist is stirring on the moor.
 Let me steal on my love in shade ;
 From the peak I shall see the hero.
 When I saw the young men above,
 Beside the oak of sounding Brano,
 Thy return from the mount was stately ;
 Thou wast fairer far than thy people.

60

65

70

SILRIC.

What voice is this sweet in my ear,
 As sweet as the warblings of summer ?
 I'll not sit by the mountain rushes,
 Nor beside the cold well of rocks ;
 Distant, Binn-bheul, distant afar
 Is my way with Fionngal to battle.

75

My own dogs are not at my side,
Nor on heath of glens are my steps. 80
I'll not see from the moorland heights
The bright maid of locks on the green,
At the falling stream by herself,
Like a bending bow in the sky,
Or the moon on waves in the west. 85

BINN-BHEUL.

Thou hast gone, Silric, thou hast gone,
And I am alone on the mount ;
The deer shall be seen on the hill,
With no man from the grass to chase him ;
His fear is no more in the wind, 90
Nor is sound of trees in his ear.
The strong hunter has left the wood,
He is now in the field of graves.
Ye strangers, children of the waves,
In battle the warrior spare ! 95

SILRIC.

Should I fall upon the field, Binn-bheul,
Raise thou faithfully up my grave,
With grey stones and a mound of earth,
A token of thy lover, Binn-bheul,
When the hunter sits by my side, 100
Lonely, with his meal in his hand—
“ In the heath is a hero,” he'll say,
“ One of fame, who was brave in battle.”
Remember thy warrior, Binn-bheul,
And he in the small house of death. 105

BINN-BHEUL.

Thou wilt certainly be remembered :
 My brave Silric shall fall in battle.
 Where, love, on the mount shall I found be,
 Since thou'l not return from death's blow ?

My way shall be in mountain glens, 110
 When the sun goes down in the west ;
 My steps shall be from people's haunts ;
 I'll be lone and pale on the hill :
 Returned from following the chase,
 I shall see thy place of repose. 115
 Silric surely shall fall in battle,
 But I shall remember the hero.

“I myself remember the chief,”
 Said the king of high woods and hills.
 “He wasted the strife in his wrath ; 120
 He is not, that I see, in the chase.
 In battle one time he was seen ;
 Pale and sad was the hero's face ;
 Dark his brow, while his struggling breast
 Heaved fast—to high hills were his steps. 125
 He will not be seen among chiefs,
 When clashings on the shield arise.
 Is the sad-looking mountain chief
 Lying in the dark narrow house ?”

“Cronan,” aged Ullin remarked, 130
 “Raise a noble lay upon Silric,
 With conquest returned from the field,
 After Binn-bheul, his love, was low.

He leaned against his love's grey stone ;
Binn-bheul was alive in his thoughts.

135

Quite distinctly he saw the maiden
In the still glen ; fair was her shade ;
But the semblance, like mist, departed,
The sunbeam went off from the field,
Her shade-form shall be seen no more."

140

"I am sitting at a cold well,
On the top of the hill in wind ;
One tree is sounding in the blast ;
Dark waves are in flight on the heath,
A storm is on the lake beyond ;
From the hill deer come to the plain ;
Not seen is the slow-stepping hunter ;
There is peace in the lonely glen.
Sad my sigh, but sadder my thoughts.

145

Could I see my love on the hill,
Straying on the path in the heath,
With her locks afloat on the wind,
With her white bosom rising high,
With her blue eye full for her friends,
Concealed by the mist of the rocks—
I would clasp thee, love, to my breast,
And take thee to thy father's home.

150

"Is it she I see distant far,
Like a gleam on the heather hill ?
Like the moon of autumn when full ;
Like the sun, mild in summer storms ?
Wilt thou come, maid of lovely locks,
Over rocks and hills to my side ?
Thy voice is faint, daughter of chiefs,

155

160

Like a ragwort's top in the wind." 165

"Has my hero returned from battle ?
Where, my love, hast thou left thy friends ?
I heard of thy death on the hill ;
I heard, and my spirit was sad."

"I have, maid of soft eyes, returned ; 170
I alone have returned of chiefs ;
They'll be seen no more on the hill ;
I have raised their graves on the field.
But why art thou up there alone,
By thyself, on the mountain-side ?" 175

"Alone I am, Silric, indeed !
Low, alone, in the wintry house.
Through grief for my lover I fell ;
I am pale within the grave, Silric !"

She fled like a shadow in wind, 180
Like mist on the heather in gloom.
"Wilt thou stay not, shadowy Binn-bheul ?
Stay, and see my tears, I am wretched.
Beautiful is thy form in mist ;
Living, thou wast beautiful, Binn-bheul. 185

"I shall sit beside a cold well,
In wind on the top of the hill.
At mid-day, when stillness is round,
Speak thou, my beloved, in the heath.
Then come thou, Binn-bheul, on the wind, 190
On the breeze in the tufts of rocks ;
Let me hear thy voice, and thou near,
At mid-day and stillness around."

Amid joy in the hall of men,
It was thus Cronan raised the song. 195

Morning brightly rose in the east ;
 The billows were blue on the deep.
 The king called for sails to his masts ;
 A wind came across from the hill,
 When slowly Innis-torc arose, 200
 And Carraig-Thura, ocean's guide.
 A sign of danger rose on high,
 In blind fire with its side in smoke.
 The king instantly smote his breast,
 And promptly drew forth his great spear ; 205
 He saw that the wind had no force ;
 His ringlets played behind his head ;
 The king's silence was not for nought.

Night fell upon Rotha of waves,
 The hill-haven received the ship ; 210
 A rock was on the verge of ocean—
 Trees bent over the sounding waves.
 On its top was Cruth-Loduinn's circle,
 And great stones of manifold powers ;
 Beneath it was a little plain, 215
 With grass, and a tree beside ocean ;
 A tree which the tempest had torn
 From the edge of rocks to the plain ;
 The blue courses of streams were there,
 And slow wind from the lonesome sea. 220
 A gleam rose from a hoary oak ;
 On the heath was the feast of chiefs ;
 The king of shields was sad of soul,
 For the dark hill leader of heroes.

The moon arose faintly and slow ; 225
 On the chiefs fell a heavy sleep ;

Their helmets were gleaming around ;
The fire lost its strength on the hill.

No slumber was on the king's eye ;

He rose in the sound of his steel,

230

With his look on the rock of waves.

In the distance slackened the fire,

Slow, red was the moon in the east ;

A blast came across from the rock ;

On its wings was, in form, a man,

235

Loduinn's spirit was pale on the shore ;

He came to his place of abode,

With his black sham spear in his hand ;

His red eye was like heaven's fire,

Like thunder on the hill his voice,

240

Distant far in the murky gloom.

Fionngal in the night raised his spear ;

His shout was heard over the plain.

“Son of night, be off from my side !

Betake thee to the wind, begone !

245

Why com'st thou, weird man, to my presence ?

Thy figure is void as thy arms.

Do I fear thy shadowy form,

Thou wraith at the circle of Loduinn ?

Weak thy shield, unweighty thy cloud ;

250

Thy bare sword like fire on great waves :

Them a gust of wind will dispart,

And thou wilt be scattered forthwith.

From my sight, black son of the skies !

To thee call thy blast, and begone !”

255

“Wouldst thou send me off from my circle ?”

Said the hollow-sounding dull voice.

“To me hosts of warriors yield;
 I look from my knoll on the people,
 And they fall like ashes before me. 260
 From my breath comes the blast of death;
 I come out above on the wind;
 But though storms be rolling on high
 Around my gloomy, cold, pale brow,
 My abode in the clouds is calm, 265
 Pleasant is the field of my rest.”

“Abide in thy field,” said the king
 Of might, with his hand on his sword,
 “Or mind Cumhal’s son on the field;
 Weak thy semblance, great is my strength. 270
 Have I turned my steps from the mount
 To thy hall on the peaceful field?
 Has my spear, in which there is strength,
 Met in heaven’s garment the voice
 Of the sprite at Cruth-Loduinn’s circle? 275
 Why in frown hast thou raised thy brow?
 Why brandished on high thy spear?
 Small my fear, weird man, of thy talk.
 I fled not from hosts in the field;
 Why should Morbheinn’s king, the great hero,
 E’er flee from the race of the wind? 281
 I’ll not flee! I know, being not blind,
 The weakness of thy arm in battle.”

“To thy land flee,” answered the sprite;
 “On the black wind escape, begone! 285
 The tempest I hold in my palm;
 The course and strain of storms are mine
 The king of Soruch is my son,

He bends on the mount to my hall ;
 His war is at the rock of hundreds,
 And scathless he'll victory win.
 Son of Cumhal, flee to thy land,
 Or feel to thy sorrow my wrath."

290

He brandished on high his dark spear ;
 He bent fiercely his lofty head ;

295

Fionngal rushed against him in wrath,
 With his bright blue sword in his hand,
 The son of Luinn of swarthy face.

The flashing weapon pierced the shade,
 The bad spirit of death in gloom ;

300

He fell without figure away

On the wind of black rocks, like smoke

A boy, with stick in his hand, breaks

Round the hearth of forging and fumes.

Cruth - Loduinn's wraith shrieked on the
 mount,

305

Gathering himself in the wind.

The island of boars heard the sound ;

The waves stopped their motion in fear ;

The chiefs of Cumhal's brave son rose

On the hill with spears in their hands.

310

"Where is he ?" they cried in grim rage,

With each mail sounding round its chief.

As the moon came out in the east,

The chief of men returned in arms ;

The youths had delight on the shore ;

315

Their souls calmed like ocean from storms.

Ullin joyfully raised the song ;

The island of rocks heard the sound ;

A full flame arose from an oak ;
 Tales were heard of the sons of heroes. 320

Frothal of Soruch sat in wrath
 At a tree on the forest slope ;
 His great host was at the deer's rock ;
 His look round was with vacant gaze ;
 His fierce thoughts were of Cathul's blood, 325
 Who taxed him by sending his heroes.

To Annir, of Soruch the chief,
 Frothal's father of the dark waves.
 Stormy blasts arose on the sea.
 Frothal struck the high isle of ocean ; 330
 The feast for three days was not spare
 In Sarn' of the sword's cheerful hall ;
 He beheld the bough of bright eyes,
 Rare Caomh-mhal' of beautiful hair.
 He loved her with the love of youth ; 335
 Like fire to her presence he hied.
 Between Frothal and Fair-hand of heroes
 Cathul rose, and great was the chief ;
 Strife was kindled among the people ;
 Rare Frothal was put under thongs. 340

Three days he continued alone,
 Strongly fettered, under a cloud ;
 On the fourth, sent Sarno of ships
 The high chief of braves to his land.
 Zeal darkened the soul of the hero ; 345
 Against Cathul his anger burned.
 When Annir's stone rose with renown,
 Frothal came in strength under mist ;
 Their strife was at the rock of smoke,

Sarno's wall that withstood the host. 350

Morning rose on the isle of waves—
When Frothal with steel struck his shield ;
Heroes moved at the breaking sound ;
Their vision had speedily gone
To grey ocean of many waves ; 355
Fionngal they beheld in his strength—
When Tubar of hosts, the chief, spoke.

“ Who is yon like a stag of the ridge,
With all his horned hinds behind him ?
Frothal, it is a fearless foe, 360
With spear forward on the hill's edge.
Morbheinn's king, the hero, it is,
Cumhal's son, of heroes and swords.
In Lochlin his deeds are not few ;
In ocean's high hall in the east 365
He shed the quick blood of the brave.
Shall I ask for peace from the hero ?
For his sword is like heaven's lightning.”

“ Contemptible son, of weak hand,”
Said Frothal of arms, in his wrath, 370
“ Shall my youth go under thick clouds ?
Shall I yield ere my time in war ?
Shall I yield ere tribute I've got,
Poor, spiritless leader from Tora ?
Why should people in Soruch' say, 375
' Frothal moved like a gleam of heaven ;
But darkness soon fell on his fire ;
After him no song shall be heard ?'
Tubar, I'll not yield while I live ;
Like great light my fame shall be roused ; 380

I'll not yield till in gloom I fall,
Chief of Tora of the cold streams."

The chief moved with his people's strength;
But they met with a rock ahead;
Conquering Fionngal firmly stood; 385
They fled crushed from the hero's steel.
They fled, not unscathed, from his hand,
While his spear pressed hard in pursuit.
On the field lay the fallen chiefs;
The hill of storms received the living. 390

Frothal saw in silence the flight;
His soul swelled with maddening rage;
He bent frowning his haughty eye;
He called to him undaunted Tubar.
" My men, Tubar, have fled in battle;
I am powerless and without fame;
Let me smite in battle the king;
My soul with high purpose is bright.
Send a bard to ask him to fight;
Speak not thou against my resolve.

"Tubar, for a sweet modest maid,
A young shoot, my spirit spurns fear;
Her dwelling is at Taine of streams,
The fair of form, daughter of Herminn,
Lovely Utha of gentle eyes. 405
Her fears were of Caomh-mhal', now cold;
Her sighs were in secret and sad,
When I hoisted aloft my sails.
Tell Utha of the pleasant harp,
My soul of her fair form is full." 410

Like these were the words of the chief,

As he fixed his shield on his side.
 Gentle Utha sighed on the hill ;
 A long time she followed the chief,
 In the mail and arms of a youth.
 In secret her eye watched the hero,
 As sadly she looked from her steel.

415

She beheld departing the bard ;
 Her hand dropped the spear on the heath ;
 Her locks were on the stormy wind ;
 Her white bosom heaved with her sighs,
 As she looked on the king of ships ;
 She essayed to speak, but thrice stopped.

420

Fionngal heard the voice of the bard ;
 He came quickly o'er in his steel ;
 His spear, amid danger not slow,
 And his sword, were flashing around.
 From Fionngal fell a heavy blow,
 When Frothal, the brave, lost his shield ;
 When his side was seen without mail,
 Death bent o'er the thoughts of the chief.

430

Darkness instantly wrapped the soul
 Of Utha of slow-moving eyes ;
 The tears trickled down her smooth cheeks ;
 She sped to the brave with her shield.
 An oak caught her hurrying steps ;
 She fell prostrate on her white arm ;
 Her helmet bounded on the hill ;
 Her white bosom heaved as she lay ;
 Her full locks on earth, and she sad.

435

Pity wakened in the king's soul,
 For the gentle maid of white hand ;

440

He restrained his sword in the strife ;
The king of arms shed heavy tears.

“Chief of Soruch’ of sounding streams,” 445
He said, raising with pain his voice,
“Have no fear to-day of my steel ;
There never was blood on my sword
When the foe in battle succumbed ;
Joy shall be in thy people’s souls, 450
Beside the great streams of thy land ;
Thou too wilt have joy, noble maid ;
Why should fall the youth on the mount,
King of Soruch’ of heavy floods ?”

Frothal heard the warrior’s voice ; 455
He saw the gentle maiden rise ;
In beauty together they stood
On the heath, in respectful silence,
Like two young trees alike in bloom,
And green on the desert’s warm side, 460
With spring-dew dropping from their tops,
When the wind on the hill is laid.

“Daughter of Herminn from the land
Of waves,” promptly said noble Frothal ;
“Why cam’st thou in beauty o’er ocean, 465
To see me disarmed on the field ?
But I’m reft of arms by a hero,
Artless maid of slow-moving eyelids ;
No weakling fair bough has o’ercome
The son of Annir, whose arm is strong. 470
Thou art stalwart and strong, O king !
In the conflicts and strife with spears ;
But gentle in peace art thou, hero,

Like the sun on dew in the field ;
 The bright foxglove shall raise its head, 475
 As the gentle breeze shakes its wing.
 Oh better it were hadst thou been
 At Soruch' of music and feasts,
 So that after me Soruch's chiefs
 Saw, with joy in the field, thy arms ! 480
 They'd joy in the fame of their sires,
 Who saw Morbheinn's king in the strife."

“Son of Annir,” the king replied,
 “Future times shall hear of our fame ;
 When warriors shall stand in strife, 485
 The song shall rise powerful and clear ;
 If they stretch their steel o'er the weak,
 If the blood of the poor stain their swords,
 No song shall be raised by the bards,
 Nor be seen their graves nor their cairns. 490
 To raise a tower strangers will come,
 When the earth will be laid aside ;
 A rusty sword in dust they'll see,
 When a man, stooping down, will say,
 ‘These arms belonged to chiefs now cold ; 495
 Their fame in song has not been heard.’
 Come thou, Frothal, over the hill,
 Feast with chiefs in the isle of waves ;
 Come thou, maiden of the dark hair,
 The shielded chief from the north's love ; 500
 Come ye to the banquet of heroes,
 And gladness will brighten your looks.”

With strong steps, and spear in his hand,
 Fionngal took himself to the hill.

Its doors opened Carraig of hundreds, 505
 The feast of flowing shells was found ;
 The soft sound of music arose ;
 There was joy in the hall of heroes ;
 Thy voice was heard, Ullin of songs,
 And ocean-circled Selma's harp. 510

Utha was in joy at his side ;
 She asked for a sad song of grief ;
 Tears suffused her slow-moving eyes,
 As Cridhmor of tender lays spoke
 About ready-armed Rinnal's daughter, 515
 Who dwelt beside the stream of Lotha.
 Most pleasant, though long, was the lay ;
 The bright bough from the north had joy.

CRIDHMOR.

Who so noiseless comes from the heath,
 Like a sun-lit cloud from the west ? 520
 From whom is the voice that is sweet,
 Though loud as the wind of the mount,
 And pleasant as the harp of Caruill ?
 My chief in his brightness it is,
 The brave hero of arms in grief. 525
 The colour of thy brow is dark ;
 Is Fionngal the chief without life ?
 Why, Conall, thy sorrow and gloom ?

CONALL.

The chief lives, from guiding the chase,
 Like great light the wroth king returned ; 530
 The sun is on his shield's bright boss,

Himself is like light in the field ;
 Loud beyond is the voice of youths.
 The contention with arms proceeds ;
 On the morrow Dearg shall come o'er
 To contend with the sons of chiefs,
 The king's children of brightest steel,
 A manly race of scars and conquests.

535

CRIDHMOR.

I have, Conall, just seen his sails,
 As broad as the hoar mist of waves ;
 Their progress to the shore is slow ;
 Many heroes hath Dearg of ships.

540

CONALL.

Fix thy father's shield on my side,
 The hard bossy shield that was Rinmal's ;
 The shield that is like the full moon,
 Coursing through the sky under storm,
 With her visage shaded and dark.

545

CRIDHMOR.

I shall quickly put up the shield,
 Though it saved not the chief of conquests.
 He fell by Cormar on the hill ;
 Perhaps thou too, Conall, wilt fall.

550

CONALL.

I may fall ; but raise thou my grave,
 Conquering Cridhmor, a grey cairn
 And a mound of earth near the waves,

To send my name and fame through Time. 555
 Do thou bend thy red eye in tears,
 From the mount's edge over my dust ;
 Smite in sorrow thy manly breast ;
 Keep, after me, living my fame,
 Though thou'rt fairer than light itself ; 560
 Like the breeze of hills thy calm voice,
 I'll not with thee stay on the mount :
 Do thou, after me, raise my fame.

CRIDHMOR.

Put the shining arms in my hand,
 The hard spear, and the sharp blue sword ; 565
 Let me instantly meet with Dearg,
 Thus aiding in battle my love.
 So farewell, ye high mountain-tops,
 Ye antlered deer, and streams of rocks ;
 From battle we shall not return ; 570
 In the distance our graves shall rise !

The feast of heroes stood three days ;
 On the fourth they each hoisted sails.
 From the north strongly blew the wind ;
 In light Fionngal struck for his land, 575
 Wooded Morbheinn of lofty towers.
 On a cloud sat Cruth-Loduinn's wraith,
 Behind Frothal above the waves,
 Swaying with the blasts of great billows,
 The white sails on the face of ocean ; 580
 The sprite's thoughts were still of his wounds,
 While he feared the arm of the king.

CARTHONN.

A TALE this of the time of old ;
The deeds of days in years gone by.

Thy murmuring, Lora of falls,
That to-day recalls the departed ;
Wood-sounding Garmallar of trees ;
Your voices are sweet in my ears.
Seest thou, Malmhina of chiefs,
A great rock with its head in heath ?
Three firs are aslant on the hill,
Green verdure is rank on its side ;
The smooth foxglove of glens is there,
Of bright top, that shakes in the wind ;
The grey thistle is at the cairn,
Slowly shedding its down with age ;
Two stones are half sunk in the earth,
With their moss in dust on the ground.
A deer has fled from the cairn's edge,
Where the brave has been put aside.
A spectre gaunt, feeble and cold,
Slowly bends o'er the hero's grave ;

5

10

15

20

The mighty Malmhina of charms,
At the rock that borders the waves.

A tale of old times I relate ;
The deeds of days in years gone by.

Who is yon from the land of strangers, 25
With thousands at his side in steel ?

Around his head are the sun's rays,
His locks strive with the wind of waves ;
His face is settling down for peace,
As calm, king, as evening around,

When a western gleam comes on woods, 30
In Cona's deep glen of slow streams.

Who is it but Cumhal's brave son,
The high king of blows and great deeds,
Surveying his own rugged hills, 35
And thousands for valour renowned.

"Raise a voice," said a hoary bard ;
"Foes have fled in fear o'er the slope,
The race of land far from the west.
The king of the shield-rusting hall, 40
With his red eye rolling in pride,
Drew the terrible sword of chiefs ;
Soon fled from the field of stern deeds,
The race of land far from the west."

It was thus woke the voice of bards, 45
Who came to Selma's hall of waves ;
A thousand lights burned on the height,
Sending brightness among the people ;
Feasting was in the hall of gems,
The night quickly passed amid joy.

"Where is the chief of mighty deeds ?" 50

Said Fionngal of beautiful locks ;
 "Where, amid the comfort of heroes,
 Is the brother of noble Muirn ?
 Dark and slow are passing his days, 55
 'Mid sounds in glens of storms round Lora.
 See ! 'tis he that comes from the hill,
 Like a war-horse unbridled, proud,
 When, seeing the stud on the plain,
 He sounds through his nostrils the wind. 60
 To Cleasamor a hundred welcomes !
 Why so long from Selma of shells ?"
 "Has the king returned," said the chief,
 "To the hill of deer with his fame ?
 With thy praise like Cumhal's of bridles, 65
 In the strife with shields to the last.
 Often have we passed over Carunn,
 To the country of swarthy foes ;
 We returned not with shields unbloody ;
 No delight had the chief of arms. 70
 Why remember the time of battles,
 And my locks to their tips so grey ?
 Unknown to the bow is my hand ;
 Light to-day are my spear and shield.
 Oh that joy would to me return, 75
 As when first I beheld the maid,
 Snowy bosom of powerful friends,
 Bright Maona, to whom people yield,
 The beautiful maid of dark eyes !"
 "Relate thou, hero," said the king,
 "The story of the gentle maiden. 80
 Like clouds on a sunbeam thy grief ;

Thy spirit is under deep gloom ;
 Deeply dark are thy thoughts, great hero,
 All lonely at Lora of sounds. 85

Let me hear of thy great young grief,
 And the cloud that darkens thy age."

"Days of peace that have been were they,"
 Said Cleasamor of arms, the chief.

"I struck for Bail'clutha's high towers 90
 And curved walls, in a dark-brown craft ;
 The wind sent in flight my white sails,
 To a haven on Cluaidh's peaceful stream.

Three days rose the feast and cheer
 In Rurmar's hall of festive bowls ; 95

With bright bosom, in joy was seen
 Goodly Maona of towers and chiefs.

Amid joy the shell was sent round ;
 Noble Rurmar presented the maid,

Whose breast was like the foam of waves ; 100
 A star of light to guests her eye ;

As black as the raven her locks ;
 More charming than her locks, her mind.

I loved greatly the maid of chiefs,
 Chaste Maona on the hill of meads. 105

"The stranger's son of shields was seen,
 A youth who walked the way to Maona ;
 His words were heard in the chief's hall ;
 He half unsheathed his heavy knife.

'Where is mighty Cumhal of arms, 110
 Who journeys in glens without plains ?
 Are Cumhal and his heroes here,
 And thou blatant, forward, and vain ?'

“ ‘ My spirit,’ I replied, ‘ O chief,
Burns with fire that is all its own ! ’ 115
Cleasamor fears nought ‘neath his shield,
'Mong thousands, though grim be the heroes.
Big thy words, armed son of the stranger,
And I at this moment alone ;
My sword trembling thrills to its point, ’ 120
As eager to swing in my hand ;
Nor word about Cumhal of hundreds,
Son of Clutha left by the tide.’

"The pride and strength of youth arose ;
We fought ; the chief fell by my steel. 125
Clutha, on its banks, heard the heroes ;
A thousand great spears flashed around.
I fought, but the strangers prevailed ;
Quick I leaped into Clutha's stream,
And spread my white sails on the deep, 130
Striking out among the dark waves.
Wretched Maona approached in tears,
Bending from above her sad eyes ;
Her voice was heard, piteous and sharp.
Backward I often turned the ship ; 135
Wind and waves from the east prevailed :
Nor since have I seen lovely Clutha,
Nor Maona of charms and dark locks ;
She fell about Clutha, all pale ;
Her cold ghost was seen on the hill. 140
Her movements were known in the night,
In the outskirts of blasts at Lora ;
Her faint beam was like the new moon,
Looking down through the haze of heaven,

When the snow-flakes are falling fast, 145
 And the world all o'er is in gloom."

"Raise, ye gentle bards, raise the song,"
 Said Fionngal, the high chief of shields ;
 "Raise praise to mild Maona of waves,
 Asleep 'mid the strains of the hills ; 150
 Call slowly her spirit with song
 To the land of great towering peaks,
 Her sweet way round the base of hills,
 On Morbheinn of happiest maids,
 The sunbeams of days that are gone, 155
 The sweet joy of men that have been,
 Walled Bail'clutha of arms was seen
 Where but seldom folk's voices rise ;
 In the hall was a raging fire ;
 Nor to-day chat of chiefs with maids. 160
 Clutha turned, light stream on the plain,
 From high walls that fell prone in dust.
 There the thistle sways in the wind,
 And the moss wails under the tower.
 The red fox in its window sits, 165
 Slow-bending the grass round his back.
 Maona's home of harps is a desert ;
 Dark the hall and the tower of hundreds.
 Raise, ye bards, a sorrowful song,
 For the wave-girt hall that has been ; 170
 The fallen brave are deep in the knoll ;
 But the days of chiefs shall come round.
 Why the hall of shells wouldest thou raise,
 Son of Time, that has many wings ?
 Thou look'st to-day from the great tower, 175

Thou'rt the next beneath the hill's brow.
 The years are not slow, sped with might
 By the wind from dark desert hills,
 That sounds in the warrior's hall,
 Fallen to a third on the ground. 180
 Come, dark blast of the desert hills ;
 But we shall be brave in our day ;
 My sword's mark shall be left in battle ;
 My soul shall be with heroes' bards.
 Raise the song and send round the shell ; 185
 Let happiness round me abound.
 When thou'l fall, whom I see on high,
 If fall thou wilt, glorious light ;
 If, from time to time, thou art faint,
 Like Fionngal of the fleetest steps ; 190
 My fame shall last long as thy beams."

It was so the king raised the song,
 On the days of chiefs great in deeds ;
 Full a thousand spokesmen above,
 Leaned forward to the hero's lay, 195
 Which resembled the sound of harps,
 When slow rises wind from the east.
 Charming were thy thoughts, warrior ;
 Why is Ossian in weakness left ?
 But thou, father, wilt stand alone ; 200
 Who with Selma's king can compare ?

Thus the night passed over with song ;
 Morning rose with exceeding joy.
 Hills were seen o'er the grey-topped waves ;
 The blue ocean was in great joy, 205
 With billows in foam breaking round

A bald rock, from us distant far ;
 From a lake mist rose to the hill,
 From ocean came a blind old wraith ;
 Its gait was not like that of men, 210
 Whose sturdy forms strode from the shore ;
 A gaunt spectre, he came from the east,
 Borne half-way up to the sky.
 To great Selma advanced the sprite,
 Falling black like blood on the plain. 215

The king saw the ominous sight,
 That foreboded the death of men ;
 He advanced to the hall of heroes,
 And grasped Cumhal's shield in his hand ;
 The ring of hard armour was heard ; 220
 The heroes rose quickly around ;
 In silence stood the people's braves,
 Each eye on the king of cold glens,
 On whose countenance swam the conflict,
 Foemen's death winding round his spear. 225
 Full a thousand shields rose on high ;
 Full a thousand dark-blue sharp swords
 Brightly shone in the hall of Selma ;
 Dire the grating on arms of steel,
 Dull the howling of rare fleet dogs ; 230
 Voice or word was uttered by none ;
 Each eye scanned the king's face and sword,
 As he drew from behind his spear.
 "Race of Morbheinn, of many heroes,
 This no time is for song or feast ; 235
 For battle is lowering before me,
 Death is darkening the hill's brow ;

A weak ghost, who delights in praise,
Showed the foe approaching from ocean ;
The mist from the water that rose, 240
Great danger foreboded to men.
With each hand on a spear's bright shaft,
With a keen sharp sword on each side,
With a black helm raised on each head,
With each mail like fire of the sky, 245
Like a storm the strife brews on high ;
Soon shall heard be the cold voice of death."

The king moved, then followed the people,
Like wave-clouds full of fire and sound,
When comes from the north the sharp lightning
On a seafarer lone in storm. 251
On Cona in wrath stood the men ;
The pure-bosomed maids saw the brave—
Like a grove with boughs were the heroes.
They saw death 'mong the youths of blows ; 255
Their sad eyes looked with fear on ocean,
On the foam which traversed like sails.
Tears coursed on their modest bright cheeks ;
Their souls grieved for the deeds of heroes.
The light brightened up on the sea, 260
A great fleet was like mist on waves ;
The heroes poured fast on the shore.
In the mustered host was a chief,
Like the red hinds' leader on hills,
With his shield gay burnished with gold ; 265
Manly, brave was the king of spears,
As he marched to Selma of towers
With his thousands round on the field.

“ Go with comforting words of peace—
 Go, Ullin, to the king of swords ; 270
 Tell him of our vigour in battle,
 That our foes are with feeble ghosts ;
 That they famed are who join our feasts
 In the ample hall of good cheer.
 They will show their sires every spear 275
 From the distant land of strong foes ;
 Surprising the sons of brave strangers,
 Who hail the friends of Morbheinn’s chief.
 Far-famed are our conquering deeds ;
 Kings have quaked amid their proud hosts, 280
 While the world is loud in our praise.”

Ullin went with peaceable words ;
 The king bravely stood to his spear ;
 He beheld the foe on the plain.
 “ Hail to the stranger’s son of feasts ! 285
 Great and slow are thy steps from ocean,”
 Said Fionngal of heroes and spoils ;
 “ Like a fire-beam from the east thy sword,
 Passing quickly down by thy side ;
 Not larger is the sky’s great moon, 290
 Than thy own ample shield, warrior !
 Red thy cheek, and youthful thy look,
 With soft graceful locks round thy head ;
 But this tree may suddenly fall,
 Nor be heard his praise in the glen. 295
 The maid by the waves shall have grief
 As she looks on the rim of ocean.
 A child shall say, seeing a ship,
 ‘ The king of the brave’s town it is !’

Thy mother's red eye shall weep tears, 300
For thy sleep in the moorland moss."

These same were the words of the king ;
Suasive Ullin came to the chief,
And threw his long spear on the ground
Before Carthonn in friendly peace, 305
While slowly he chanted the song.

“Come and feast with Fionngal of hills,
Mighty Carthonn from ocean’s glens ;
Come over and feast with the king,
Or draw to no purpose the sword. 310
Many, chief, are our foemen’s ghosts ;
But we and our friends are renowned.
Let Carthonn look the plain all o’er,
And its many green mounds raised high
With grey stones among rustling grass ;
These the graves are of Fionngal’s foes,
Foes who rowed o’er ocean with oars.” 315

"Are thy words to a sprite in arms,
Forward bard from Morbheinn?" said Car-
thonn.

“ Has my colour changed unto pale,
Son of song, not forward in battle ?
Hop’st thou to lay my soul in shade,
With tales of the lifeless and gone ?
This arm has slain heroes in strife ;
Talk about my fame is not dumb.
To the weak of arm go with song ;
Let them yield to the hero, Fionngal !
Haven’t I seen Bail’clutha of ships ?

Can I sit on the knoll in peace?
Tell this, bard, to the son of Cumhal— 330
Cumhal, who threw aloft his brand,
In the hall on Clutha's high bank,
The home of my sires by the waves."

OIGH-NAM-MOR-SHUL.

As the light of heaven comes through mist
On great Larmon of greenest knoll ;
So the tale comes of lifeless chiefs
To my soul when the night is dull,
When the gentle bard quits his joy, 5
His tuneful harp in the high hall ;
Then a voice comes to Ossian's ear,
Awaking soul in the bard's mind ;
'Tis the voice of departed years,
All gathering back with their deeds. 10
Let me catch up these vivid tales,
And record them in faultless strains.
The king's lay is no muddy stream,
When raised in the strife of strings,
By Fair-hand in Lutha of woods, 15
Malmhina of firm graceful form.
Lutha of the clear-sounding strings,
No quiet have thy lofty hills,
When modestly strays her white hand
O'er the harp with lays of the bards. 20

A light to the sad gloomy thoughts
 That come over my darkened soul,
 Daughter of Toscar of hard helms,
 Give ear to the slow pensive sound !
 Call thou instantly back again
 The shadowy years that have been.

25

In days of the fierce-looking king,
 With my locks curled like maiden's hair,

I looked upon Cathlinn' of waves,
 From ocean's ridge, dark without mist.

30

On my course to far Fuarfead's isle,
 Of great forest-trees in the deep.

The king of heroes shipped my sword,
 For hard blows to the foes of King

Malorchsel, of cold whistling trees,
 Man of bounteous feasts in peace.

35

War from ocean compassed the chief.

In Coileid's haven I furled my sails,
 Sent my sword to the chief of feasts ;
 He knew the high badge of the brave,
 And exultingly raised his spear.

40

The chief came forth from his high hall,
 And grasped with emotion my hand.

“ Why has Morbheinn's race of bards come
 To a man without strength or deeds ?

45

Tonthormod of spears and sharp swords,
 Man of feasts and bouts in Sardronlo,

Set his eye on my lovely daughter,
 Oigh-nam-mor-shul of purest breast.

He asked her, I refused the maid ;

50

Our fathers through pride had been foes.

He came with great forces of war,
 For vengeance to Fuarfead of sails ;
 O'er each other he rolled my people.
 Why has the warrior come north,
 To a man who falls without deeds ?”

55

“ I've come not as a feeble lad,
 To look without use on the strife ;
 The great king remembers thyself,
 And thy feasts so social in peace.”

60

The king has come down from high waves
 To the isle of forests and trees ;
 Thou wast not a cloud in the storm ;
 There were friendship, feasting, and song.
 'Twas thy kindness, chief, raised my sword ; 65
 Thy foes may, perhaps, feel its strength ;
 We forget not at times our friends,
 Though we dwell far over the sea.”

“ Rare son of Treunmor of bold sails,
 Thy voice, like Cruth-Loduinn's, is sharp,
 When speaks from the sundering clouds
 The great one who dwells in the sky.

70

Many braves o'er my feasts that bent,
 To-day in my straits raise no spear.
 My eye is on ocean's wind, dying ;
 No spread sails are seen in the frith.

75

Steel is in the hall amid joy ;
 Here no speckled shell is to cheer.
 Come, thou son of heroes, across ;
 For the night is dark round the hill ; 80
 Hear a voice of the clearest ring,
 From the maid of cold, moaning waves.”

On a many-stringed charming harp
 Rose her white hand, the loved of hundreds,
 Oigh-nam-mor-shul of brightest look. 85
 In silence I stood far apart.
 Like light was the maid of soft locks,
 The sweet maid of the isle of waves,
 With two eyes that beamed like two stars
 Which look through dark showers of the sky, 90
 When the strayed on ocean looks up
 At bright rays on the clouds of night.
 With morning I went forth to battle,
 To Tormul of great streams from hills.
 At that instant came on the foe, 95
 Tormod, with equipped bossy shield,
 When from side to side spread the conflict;
 Tormod and I met in the strife;
 I broke his ineffective steel;
 The king of cold billows was bound. 100
 I brought his hand, through strength of thongs,
 To the cheering shell of Malorchsel;
 On the chief rose the joyful feast;
 Foes fell from their evil design.
 Tormod to a distance withdrew 105
 From the lovely maid of meek eyes.
 "Son of Fionngal," began the king,
 "Thou'l not leave me without reward;
 I'll put light in thy ship in peace,
 The bright maid of eyes without frown; 110
 This same fire with delight shall burn
 Round a soul that exults in deeds;
 Not unseen shall be her soft steps

In Selma of kings and great hills."

In the dwelling drowsy and dark,
My eyelids drooped in gentle sleep ;
On my ear fell the cadence of song,
Like a hill-blast that spares the plain,
A whirlwind that chases all round

The thistle's beard hoary with age,
Dark-moving on the hills of grass.

Whose that voice ? that of Fuarfead's maid,
Slow-raising her song in the night ;
The maid knew of my gentle soul,
Like a stream by the side of song.

" Whence is the chief," said the maiden,

" That looks on the blue mist of ocean ?

Who is it but he of long hair,

As black as the hill-raven's wing ;

I see upon the breeze his locks ;

Graceful are his steps under grief.

The man's eye is in useless tears,

His manly breast is heaving slow

O'er his soul, that is rent apart.

Leave the shore and I far away,

Straying among the rocks alone.

The race of kings are weak and soft ;

My soul is distracted, warrior.

Wherefore have our forefathers been

At fierce enmity, loved of maids ?"

" Sweet voice from the high isle of tides,

Why wail under gloom of the skies ?

Treunmor's noble race of strong forms

Are not muggy of soul nor proud.

115

120

125

130

135

140

Thou'l not stray alone among hills, 145
 Oigh-nam-mor-shul of gentle eye.
 In this breast is a silent voice,
 That does not reach the ears of foes ;
 It requires me to hear thy grief,
 When my soul with pity is moved. 150
 Leave the hall, thou of sweetest song,
 Tormod of the waves shall not mourn."

The thongs fell with morn from the king ;
 I reached him the maiden's soft hand.
 Thus Malorchol heard me in peace, 155
 Within the hall of highest sound.
 " King of Fuarfead of towering trees,
 Wherefore should Tonthormod have grief ?
 His sires were men who drew the sword,
 Himself was heaven's lightning in battle. 160
 The fathers of the chiefs were foes ;
 But joy is in the cheer of death,
 When their hands are on the grey shells
 Which circle around dark Cruth-Loduinn.
 Put, each of you, away his wrath, 165
 The black cloud that lowered of old."

Deeds like these were mine, when my locks
 Round my shoulders fell without age ;
 When light was like a garment round
 The bright maid of the isle of trees. 170

It was thus we quickly recalled
 The shadowy years that have been.

GAOL-NAN-DAOINE.

CAOL-AMHAINN of brown falls from rocks,
Blindly dark is thy course above ;
My eye is on thy waving tree,
At Caruill's hall of arms and sounds.

There abode in her loveliness, 5
Gaol-nan-daoine of king's high blood ;
Her eyes were like the light of stars,
Her fine arms without fault ; her hands
White as foam on a falling stream ;
Her stainless breasts would slowly rise, 10
Like the white-topped waves of great ocean ;
Her soul was like a stream of light
'Neath a brent brow of fairest form.
Who, among the high-bosomed maids,
Could compare with the people's love ? 15

At command of the conquering king,
To distant Crona of brown falls,
Without frown moved Toscar of Lutha,
And Ossian the singer of lays ;
At our side were three bards with song, 20

And three shields of trappings not bare,
 Going stones to raise on the hill,
 That would heroes' fame set in glory.

At winding mossy Crona's stream, 25
 Mighty Fionngal scattered the foe ;
 The strangers all fled from his sword,
 Like a wild sea dashed on the shore.

We came to the field of his fame ;
 Night approached from behind the hill ;
 From an earth-bank I tore an oak, 30
 Flame was raised in the mist of hills.

“Look down, my illustrious sires,
 Look down from abodes all your own ;
 When your race wakes to fame anew,
 Chiefs of arms will shine on the wind.” 35

From Crona's beach I picked a stone,
 Amid songs with the strength of bards ;
 The blood of Fionngal's vanquished foes
 Marked the dark-green moss of the burn.
 Under that I planted apart 40
 Three bosses from the shields of foes,
 As alternately rose and fell
 Night music from glorious Ullin.

Toscar put his knife under earth,
 With its dark-blue sheath of hard steel ;
 Earth around the stone was raised high,
 To call the talked-of year to fame. 45

Mossy daughter of the hill-stream,
 That before me aloft dost rise,
 Stone taken from the beach beyond,
 When rocky Selma's race is lost, 50

Speak thou to the feeble of men,
 Trudging on, perplexed, in the night,
 Resting dark and sad on the way,
 While thy moss in innocence wails.

55

To his eye the years shall return,
 Fierce warfare before him shall rise,
 As blue-shielded kings rush to battle.

'Neath a rock the full moon casts shade
 On the field of heroes and chiefs.

60

He will start from his darkling dream,
 As morn hastens departing night ;
 Chiefs' graves will be seen on the hill,
 True heroes whose deeds were in light ;
 He'll speak of the stone on the plain,
 And age will reply to his questions,
 "That grey stone was raised by great Ossian,
 A brave chief on whom fell the years."

65

From Caol-amhainn slow moved the bard,
 From Caruill, who respected strangers,
 To bid us to the feast on high.

70

At the home of White-hand benign,
 Gaol-nan-daoin' sprung from noble chiefs.
 Caruill shone in his locks of age,
 When he saw the race of his friends,
 Like two youthful boughs of the hill,
 On trees that delight in the heights.

75

"Children of great heroes," said Caruill,
 "Ye bring back the days that have gone,
 When I stepped down from ocean's waves
 To Selma of oaks by the surge,
 Pursuing the dark son of Ciarglas,

80

The dweller in ocean's fleet wind ;
 Our sires were implacable foes ;
 We met beside Clutha of banks ; 85
 He fled from my sword on the sea ;
 As I followed him with my eye,
 Deceived by the darkness of night,
 I came to the hall of the king,
 To Selma of full-breasted maids. 90

Noble Fionngal came with his bards,
 And Conlaoch, arm of death to hundreds.
 Three days there was feast in the hall ;
 I saw the full blue eye of Erinn,
 The daughter of great chiefs, Roscranna, 95
 The sweet light of Cormac's brave race.
 Not forgot were my parting steps ;
 The king of blows gave me his shield,
 There 'tis high in the hall of harps,
 Times of chiefs in remembrance keeping. 100
 Children of great heroes from ocean,
 Ye bring back the days that have gone."

Caruill kindled the feast's bright flame ;
 Two bosses of sound from our shields
 Were put under stones amid joy, 105
 To speak to the new race of chiefs.
 "When battle shall roar," said the king,
 "When in conflict with arms shall meet
 Our sons, this shall caution to peace ;
 Great virtue this stone shall possess, 110
 When they furbish their spears for use—
 Were our sires not under renown
 At the feast ? Put aside the shield."

Night descended with sable locks ;
 The maid loved by chiefs raised the song ; 115
 Among the harps her strain was heard,
 Gaol-nan-daoine of the white arms.
 Toscar paled in his place, before
 The loved of hundreds. On his soul
 She came like a gleam of the sky 120
 On the dark ridge of bounding ocean,
 When the light breaks forth from a cloud,
 On the hoary foam of the waves.

With morning we aroused the hill ;
 Our steps were on the track of deer ; 125
 They fell by their ever-loved streams.
 We returned through Crona of conquests ;
 From the wood on us came a youth,
 With puny shield and harmless spear,
 “ Whence the beam that comes from the hill ? ”
 Said Toscar from Lotha of hundreds. 131
 “ Is there peace in Caol-amhainn of strings,
 Round the graceful light o’er the harp ? ”

“ In Caol-amhainn of streams,” said the youth,
 ‘ Dwelt the light of chiefs o’er the harp ; 135
 Her movements are now on the hill,
 With the son of the great, brave king,
 Who took captive her soul through love ;
 For a time she strays from the hall.”

“ Young stranger of the woful tale, 140
 Hast thou seen his aspect and course ?
 He shall fall into lasting sleep.
 Render quickly to me thy shield.”
 In anger he tore off the shield ;

A modest bosom rose behind, 145
Like a swan's breast gliding unscathed
On the billows of mighty ocean.
Gaol-nan-daoine herself it was,
Caruill's daughter, of king's high blood ;
Her blue eye sought Toscar of arms ; 150
In the conflict her soul was lost.

C R O M A.

THE calm voice of my love it is !
Seldom dost thou come to my dreams.
Sires of Toscar, open your hall,
Distant yonder, high in the sky ;
Open ye the doors of the clouds ;
Malmhina is sad and in tears. 5

In my vision I heard a voice ;
The noise of my bosom was loud.
Why after it followed a blast
From the dark-moving lake beyond 10
To the sounding wings of hill-boughs ?
Her dream on the hill left Malmhina ;
She beheld her lover descending,
A mist-robe flowed around the chief,
With gleams of the sun on its side, 15
And flashing like the gold of strangers.

The calm voice of my love it is !
Seldom dost thou come to my dreams.

Thy place of abode is my soul,
Son of Ossian, of the strong arm ; 20

My sighs rise with morning in vain,
Like high heaven's rain are my tears,
Slow-falling from the brow of night.

— A fair tree was I, chief of heroes ;
Fragrant were my boughs, noble Oscar, 25
When death came like wind from the hill ;
'Neath his wing my chief fell in dust.

Gentle spring returned with its showers ;
But for me rose no single leaf.

The maids saw me silent apart, 30
And they struck the slow harps of strings.
The maids saw me grieving through love ;
"Why so sad is Fair-hand of mense,
First maiden from Lotha of storms ?
Has Oscar been always thy talk ? 35
At morning, like rays of the sun ;
In arms, was he all thy desire ?"

" Pleasant is the song in my ear,
Maid of Lotha of winding streams ;
Heard'st thou the dead's voice on the hill, 40
In the dreams of thy darkling sleep,
When slumber slow-fell on thine eyes,
On the banks of high-sounding Mor-shruth ?
When thou cam'st from the mountain chase,
Calm the day, high in heaven the sun, 45
Thou didst then hear the bards of song.
Pleasant but mournful is thy voice—
'Tis pleasant, Malmhina of heroes ;
Grief melts the poor soul that is dark ;
But joy is in sorrow with peace, 50
When the outburst of grief subsides ;

Wailing wastes the mournful away ;
 Few their days in the land of chiefs,
 Lovely-looking daughter of Toscar.
 They shall fall like the foxglove down, 55
 On which looks the bright sun in strength,
 When settles the dew on its locks,
 And night-storms lay its heavy head.
 Listen thou to my old tale, maiden ;
 I remember the triumphs of youth." 60

At the king's voice I hoisted sails,
 I struck Croma of hills from ocean—
 Croma, in Innis-faile of people,
 The high hall of heroes and conquests,
 Of grey towers upon ocean's verge, 65
 The town of Crothar, the great chief,
 Who triumphed in youth over foes ;
 Round the hoary age raised its hand.
 Rothmar stretched his sword o'er the hero,
 Which kindled the deep wrath of Fionngal. 70
 " Go, Ossian, to battle across ;
 The friend of my youth is in straits."

I sent forward the bard with song ;
 He came to the hall of the brave.
 Among the arms of chiefs sat Crothar, 75
 His eye failed, and hoar were his locks.
 The grey hero leaned on his staff ;
 His ringlets fell slow round his head ;
 He hummed a tune of times departed ;
 The sound of our arms struck his ear ; 80
 Crothar rose and stretched out his hand ;
 " All hail to the brave son of triumphs,

Ossian!" said the warrior, speaking;
 "Strength in war has left Crothar's arm,
 Should I raise up the sword to smite, 85
 As on the day when Fionngal achieved
 Triumph in Srutha's curved glens!
 He himself was the chief of men;
 Crothar without blemish had fame.
 To me he gave the praise of heroes, 90
 He aside laid the bossy shield,
 The shield of Calthar, slain in battle
 'Neath the king, in the strife with swords.
 See it high on the wall displayed;
 My eye has failed; Crothar is blind. 95
 Is thy strength like the strength of chiefs?
 Reach, Ossian, thy arm to the hoary."
 I reached forth my arm to the king;
 The aged hero grasped my hand;
 The sigh broke from his struggling breast; 100
 Tears unceasing fell down his cheeks.
 "Son of the mighty, thou art strong;
 But in form unlike Morbheinn's chief.
 Who is he with him to compare
 'Mong the chiefs of hundreds in battle? 105
 Let the feast be spread in my hall;
 Let each gentle bard raise the song;
 Great is he whom my walls enclose,
 Race of Croma that answers the waves."
 The banquet spread, music was heard, 110
 High joy was in the hall of chiefs;
 But joy around the stifled sigh,
 When sorrow dwells dark in the breast,

Like faint light from a feeble moon,
Spreading on the brow of the sky.

115

The music sank, leisurely spoke
Croma's king of the aged form ;
Without tears spoke the chief of heroes,
Sorrow swelling amid his voice.

“ Son of Fionngal, seest thou not, hero, 120
Deep sadness amid Crothar's joy ?
At the feast I never had grief,
While chiefs lived in battle who smote.
Among friends my delight was great,
When my brave son brightened the feast ; 125
But that beam has left me in anguish,
Nor behind left one streak of light.
He fell, son of Fionngal, of braves,
In the strife of strokes at my side.

Rothmar heard in Tromlo of grass 130
That my eyes were shut from the light ;
He heard of my arms without use,
On the wall of harps amid dust ;
That he heard ; in his towering pride,
He came unto Croma with strife ; 135
In battle my host by him fell ;
Rage fired me to meet him in arms.

What could Crothar do without sight ?
Helpless were my steps under gloom.
Woe's me ! without vigour to strike ! 140
Oh that bygone days would return,
Days of strength in which I gave battle,
And won great renown in the strife !

“ From the hunt's noise returned my son,

Faobhar-gorm of the dark-brown locks ; 145
 He never raised a sword in anger ;
 His young arm was weak 'neath a shield ;
 The great spirit of the youth stirred ;
 From his eyes flashed unflinching fire.
 He saw under sorrow my steps ; 150
 Sighs of pity woke in his breast."

“ King of Croma,” thus spoke the hero,
 “ Is it because thou hast no son,
 Is it because I am not strong,
 That the stifled sigh moves thy breast ? 155
 Let my father perceive my strength ;
 I have drawn from its sheath the sword ;
 In youth my delight is in deeds ;
 I have slowly bent the stringed bow ;
 In the conflict Rothmar I'll meet, 160
 With Croma's race of mighty deeds,
 I shall Rothmar meet on the plain ;
 My soul strongly burns without fear.”

“ Encounter the chief under arms,
 Son of Crothar, feeble and slow ; 165
 But let other warriors lead,
 Until the blind man hear thy step.
 My eye shall not see thee in steel,
 Faobhar-gorm of the auburn locks.
 They advanced, they met, the youth fell. 170
 Rothmar is at Croma of feasts,
 He who pierced my excellent son
 With the blue point of his great spear.”

This no time is for filling cups,
 When I grasp in my hand the spear. 175

Friends beheld me greatly aroused,
And suddenly left the great feast.
We travelled in the night through heath ;
Morning calmly greyed in the east ;
Before me lay a deep green glen, 180
Whose winding streams oceanward flowed.
In it Rothmar lay with dark hosts
Under arms, grey-gleaming in light.
We fought in the long narrow glen ;
Foes fled, Rothmar fell by my sword 185
Ere the day had closed in the west,
Crothar seized shielded Rothmar's arms ;
He felt them in age with his hands,
With calm joy passing o'er his thoughts.

People gathered to the chief's hall ; 190
The sound of festive shells was heard,
While the harp of slow strings awoke ;
Five bards, each in turn, gave the song
In praise of the warrior's son,
And Ossian, the new man of hundreds ; 195
Their souls kindled up in their breasts,
With airs suiting the fire of harps,
Greatly stirred was the people's joy ;
With triumph peace returned to Croma.

Night descended silent and still ; 200
Morning passed away amid joy ;
No foes came amid the deep gloom,
Drawing from behind their great spears ;
Greatly raised was the host's delight,
To find Rothmar pale on the field. 205

I raised a dirge o'er the dead youth,

When they laid the chief under ground ;
Aged Crothar was greatly bowed,
But he heaved no sigh for his son.
He searched, found a wound in his breast ; 210
'Twas a ray of light in his grief.
The blind hero to meet me came ;
Speaking, he took hold of my hand.

“ King of spears of the sharpest points,
My son fell by the sword with fame ; 215
My hero fled not through the glen ;
He encountered death without stain,
Pressing hard on the strength of foes.
Happy, chief, are the youthful brave,
Of whom praise in dark death is heard ; 220
They see not in the hall of shields
The smiling at their withered hands ;
Remembered in glorious song,
Young maids will shed tears on their dust.
'Tis meet age from warfare should fade, 225
They whose might in youth was renowned ;
By the living they are forgotten ;
All unnoticed they drop away,
Unsighed for by even their own sons ;
Their cairns are upraised amid joy ; 230
Without tears are the tombstones of heroes.
Happy, chief, are the youthful brave,
Of whom praise in dark death is heard.”

CALTHONN AND CAOLMHAL.

SWEET to heroes the voice of song,
Man who dwell'st alone in the cave ;
It descends like a mountain rill
To me, in the sun's narrow glen.

Man that comest from the Gall's plain, 5
My soul stirring in the feasts' hall,
As in the days of years gone by ;
I'm stretching my hand to the spear,
I'm stretching my hand that is weak,
While stifling the sigh in my breast. 10

Son of the rock-cave, wilt thou hear
A lay on his youth's deeds from Ossian ?
My spirit is with that great time ;
Light and joy return to the chief.

Even so beheld is the sun 15
As he travels bright in the west,
After passing under a cloud,
The green hillocks of showers are gleaming,
The blue streams rejoice in the glen ;
The old hero moves on his staff, 20

With flaming grey locks round his head.
 Sees the dweller in the dim cave
 In the high hall Ossian's great shield,
 Marked all o'er with the scars of battle?
 The bright glitter has left its boss, 25
 Its trappings, woe's me, are in rust!
 That shield that graced a hero's side,
 A ruler of hundreds on Tuaide,
 With Duntalmo of heavy strokes,
 Ere he fell beneath the sharp steel. 30
 Hear, thou dweller in the dim cave,
 A great tale of the years gone by.

Great Rathmor of chiefs lived at Clutha ;
 'Neath his roof dwelt woe-begone weaklings ;
 Never closed were his ample doors ; 35
 The banquet and feast were aye spread.
 The children of stranger Galls came
 With greetings to the banquet's chief ;
 The bards raised the ditty and song ;
 Slowly struck were the strings of harps ; 40
 Joy brightened in the face of grief.
 Great Duntalmo in towering pride,
 Rushed swiftly to battle with Rathmor ;
 Clutha's chief great victory reaped ;
 But Duntalmo, burning with rage, 45
 With his people came under night ;
 Rathmor fell under arms of steel ;
 He fell within the hall of song,
 Where soon would spread be the full feast,
 When the stranger Galls would be round. 50

In their youth were Colmar and Calthonn,

The great chief of the car's two sons;
They came with rejoicing and pride
To the ample hall of their father.

They looked upon him in his blood, 55
And a flood streamed down from their cheeks.
To its depth Duntalmo's soul melted,
When he saw the youths without friend.

In Alteutha, the tower of storms,
They enlivened the war-chief's home; 60
In his presence they bent the bow,
And with him to battle went forth.
They saw in dust their father's walls,
And the bramble green in the hall;
Tears fell from the cheeks of the heroes, 65
And their faces at times were sad.

Duntalmo ignored not their grief;
His soul burned to compass their death;
He fastened them down in two caves,
At Teutha, a wild-howling waste. 70

There came not the sun with his rays,
Nor the moon of the sky at night;
In darkness the warriors lay,
In darkness without gleam of light,
There looking in secret for death. 75

Caolmhala of locks and calm eyes,
The chief's daughter, shed silent tears;
Her eye was on Calthonn with fear,
His beauty was aye in her breast.
She trembled in soul for the hero; 80
But little was that she could do;
Her arm could not raised be to smite,

Her sword was ne'er wielded for use,
 Her white breast would not rouse 'neath mail ;
 No dread would her eye be to heroes. 85
 Caolmhal of the brent lovely bosom,
 Little canst thou do for thy love !
 Many and short were her steps,
 Her lovely locks flew round her head,
 Her frantic eye burned through her tears, 90
 The sweet maid of mense went amissing.
 Under night she came to the hall ;
 She arrayed her pure form in steel,
 The steel of a chief lost in youth,
 Slain in strife at the port of waves. 95
 She came to the cave of her love,
 And loosened the thongs from the hero.

“ Arise, son of Rathmor, the warlike ;
 Rise, the night is moonless and murk ;
 Let us flee to Selma of harps, 100
 Brave leader of heroes from Clutha.
 I'm the son of Lamhgeal of hills,
 Who dwelt in thy father's great tower ;
 I heard of thee dark in the cave,
 And my soul felt wasting with grief. 105
 Arise, son of Rathmor, the warlike ;
 Rise, the night is moonless and murk.”

“ Voice of heaven,” the chief replied,
 “ That comest from a cloud to Calthonn !
 The spirits of my fathers move, 110
 And often appear in my dreams,
 Since the day the sun left my eye,
 And this darkness compassed me round.

Or art thou warlike Lamhgeal's son,
The chief I myself saw at Clutha?

115

Shall I flee to Selma of harps,
And Colmar helpless under steel?

Shall I flee to Morbheinn of storms,
And Colmar without ray of light?

I shall flee not. Give me thy spear,
Son of Lamhgeal of feasts with song;
By his brother Calthonn shall stay."

120

"Full a thousand chiefs," said the maid,
"With great spears are about the cars;

What can Calthonn of the hills do
Among so great a host in arms?

125

Let us flee to the king of great hills;
For he will come hither with battle;

At all times his hand is stretched forth
To the poor o'erwhelmed with distress;

130

His sword round the weak is like lightning.
Arise, son of Rathmor, the warlike;

Night will pass unused by the chief;
Rise, the daylight will see thy steps;

The great young brave of shields shall fall."

135

The chief quickly rose with a sigh,
Amid tears falling down for Colmar.

He came unto Selma of storms,
Unwitting of the maiden's beauty.

A helmet was on her smooth brow;
Her breast softly heaved under steel.

140

The chief, coming down from the chase,
Saw before him the harmless strangers;
Like two rays from the light of heaven,

In the hall of a hundred shells. 145

The king heard the sad tale from Clutha,
And in wrath turned around his eyes ;
A thousand rushed to strife on Tuaid,
Half drawing their steel without rust.

I came with my spear from the hill, 150
With joy burning high in my breast ;
The great hero first spoke to Ossian,
Who was foremost among the chiefs.

“Light of my prowess,” said the king,
“Son of Fionn’, for strife raise my spear ; 155
Go to Tuaid of steep hill-streams ;
Save Colmar of cars and of feasts ;
Let thy praise to my presence come,
Like a breeze going down a glen,
Till in secret my thoughts arise 160
‘Bout my son’s new fame for the hills.
Be, Ossian, like a blast in battle,
But calm and meek to conquered foes ;
Even so was brightened my fame.

Be, Ossian, like Selma’s great chief ; 165
When the bold come with vaunting words
To the hall of harps, my eyes droop ;
Aye outstretched for blows is my arm,
When the weak and wronged to me come
My sword is always their defence.” 170

Joy awakened at the king’s words ;
With coolness I went under arms ;
At my side went Diaran of woods,
And Deargo, high king of blue spears ;
Three hundred young men from the glens 175

Close-followed my steps on the plain ;
 The strangers advanced at my side.
 But Duntalmo had heard the sound
 Of our arms approaching his land ;
 He collected Tuaid's spare strength ; 180
 On a knoll stood his men for strife,
 Like rocks by a thunder-bolt broken,
 After rushing through crashing trees
 Without leafage, and badly scorched ;
 Without streams that even scantily fall 185
 On their blackened and curving clefts.

Loudly-roaring Tuaid rolled vast
 Before stalwart foes of renown.
 Quickly with them bards will proceed
 To offer war to Duntal's men. 190

He smiled through the gloom of his pride,
 As his heroes thronged on the hill,
 Like clouds on a rocky hill's brow,
 When a strong wind shivers their sides,
 Scattering their black locks around. 195

They brought youthful Colmar to Tuaid,
 Many thongs tightly bound the chief.
 In sadness were the hero's steps,
 Whose eyes were directed above,
 Lingering upon all his friends. 200

We stood in the strength of our arms,
 Tuaid's water in tumult roared.

Duntalmo with his blue spear came,
 And struck the bright youth in the side ;
 He fell on the edge of the plain 205
 In blood, and distinctly we heard

The moans that rose fast from his breast.

I instantly sprang on my spear ;
 Calthonn took the stream with a bound ;
 Tuaid's children fell by our hands ; 210
 Night's gloom on the warriors fell.
 Duntalmo sat high on a cliff,
 In an ancient resounding wood ;
 Anger greatly burned in his breast
 At brave Calthonn of the fleet cars. 215
 But Calthonn himself stood in grief,
 Sorrowing for Colmar who fell,
 Bright Colmar, who fell in his youth,
 Ere his fame under arms arose.

“Raise a dolorous strain of woe,
 Mighty bard ; a chief is to praise.”
 He stood under a spreading oak,
 Oft throwing his steel on the mead.
 Caolmhal's gentle eyes were in tears,
 In secret, but large on her cheeks ; 225
 She foresaw her own father's death,
 Or the fall of the chief from Clutha.

Night fled to its half from the sky ;
 Peace and darkness fell on the plain,
 As the spirit of Calthonn sank ; 230
 Sleep fell on the hero of spears ;
 But the chief, half opening his eyes,
 Heard Tuaid's roar crossing his ear ;
 Pale, and telling of his great wounds,
 The ghost of Colmar came in shade ; 235
 He leaned o'er the chief of high towers,
 And sparely and faint raised his voice.

“ Is it sleep with the son of shields,
 In grey night, and his brother low ?
 Rose we not to the mountain chase, 240
 When we tracked dun roes round the peaks ?
 Thou hast, chief, not forgotten Colmar,
 But when death encompassed his youth ;
 I am pale at the meadow’s rock ;
 The young day breaks ; let Calthonn rise ; 245
 Duntalmo will come with harsh deeds.”

He fled fast on the sounding wind ;
 Calthonn saw his departing steps ;
 He set off under strain of arms.
 Soon in silence sweet Caolhal woke ; 250
 Her steps, and she sad, strayed through night ;
 A long spear trailed unused behind her.
 When he came to the meadow’s rock,
 When he saw his brother all pale,
 Grief and anger stirred his great breast. 255
 The moanings of death were around ;
 They closed, pressing, around the chief,
 And placed him under slender thongs ;
 They made him fast with lowering eyes ;
 The dawn glimmered up in the east, 260
 And night disappeared from the mount.

I myself awoke at the sound,
 And moved in the steel of my sires.
 Diaran was by my side at Tuaid,
 And Deargo, the red youth, in strength. 265
 Clutha’s chief, whom we had, was gone.
 My dumb soul with sorrow was moved,
 While I feared for my great renown ;

In my breast was the pride of might.
 "Race of Morbheinn," I said, "ye chiefs, 270
 We have never been thus in battle ;
 Our sires were not always on hills
 When foes were in force on the plain.
 They in strength were like heaven's eagle ;
 Their fame is like the charm of bards ; 275
 But we all are falling away ;
 Our renown is thus but a shadow.
 What would Morbheinn's warlike king say,
 If Ossian should fail him at Tuaid ?
 Let your steel rise, heroes of might ! 280
 Follow Ossian with sounding blows ;
 Without fame he shall not return
 To Selma of triumphs and towers."

On Tuaid's blue waves, from the east
 Rose bright morn ; Caolmal was in tears. 285
 She spoke about Clutha of men ;
 From her fingers thrice dropped the spear ;
 At the stranger my anger burned,
 My spirit was mad at the youth.
 "Son of the hand utterly soft, 290
 Shall war be made with tears on Tuaid ?
 Triumph comes not to thralls through grief ;
 The sigh has no place in the brave.
 Hie to wretched Carmun of deer,
 To stroll about Tuaid of grass ; 295
 But quickly relinquish the arms,
 Soft son without vigour or fame ;
 Another shall raise them in battle."

From his shoulder I tore the mail,

A snowy bosom for praise rose ; 300
 Her look lowered in sadness to earth.
 In silence I looked at the heroes ;
 My spear fell from my hand unnerved ;
 A sigh in my bosom rose high ;
 When I heard who the maiden was, 305
 The tears fastly fell from the brave.
 All hail to the bright beam of youth !
 I forthwith put the strife in motion.
 Son of caverns high on the mount,
 Why speaks Ossian of Tuaid's dead ? 310
 Forgotten in the land of towers,
 Their graves are not seen on the field.
 The dark years have come with their storms ;
 Their mounds have fallen to the ground.
 Not seen is the grave of Duntalmo, 315
 Nor the place where he fell by my hand.
 With vision bedimmed, in the night,
 By the oak that brightens the hall,
 A hero hoar with age will tell
 His children around of his deeds, 320
 And how fell by heroes the Tuails ;
 To his voice the youngsters will lean,
 With wonder and joy in their eyes.
 Brave Calthonn I found at an oak,
 I cut the hard thongs from his hands ; 325
 I gave him the modest bright maid
 Of fair form, high bosom and full ;
 They dwell over in Tuaid's hall.

FIONN GAL.

D U A N I.

CUCHULLIN sat by Tura's wall,
In a sounding, leafy tree's shade ;
His spear against the rock of clefts,
His great shield on the grass beside him.
The thoughts of the man were of Cairbre, 5
A hero he slew in fierce combat—
When the watchman of ocean came,
Fithil's fleet son of high steps.

“ Arise thou, Cuchullin, arise,
I see a strong ship from the north ! 10
Move quickly, high chief of the feast ;
Great is Suaran, many his people.”

“ Moran,” said the blue-eyed warrior,
“ Thou wast feeble, and aye didst tremble ;
Many, through thy fears, is the foe. 15
Son of Fithil, Fionngal it is,
Mighty hero of the dun hills.”

“ I have seen the leader,” said Moran ;

“ Resembling a rock is the chief ;
 His spear like a pine of the mountains, 20
 Like the moon uprising his shield.
 He sat on a rock by the shore,
 Like the mist upon yonder mount.
 Many, entertainer of guests,
 The war-hands that with thee shall rise, 25
 Stout warriors of the hardest strokes,
 Of keen swords in the strife of heroes ;
 But many and strong are the foes
 That encompass Tura of winds.”

The chief spoke like a wave on a rock : 30
 “ Who is like me within this land ?
 Thy braves would not stand in my presence ;
 But lowly would fall by my arm.
 Who is he that could meet my sword,
 Save Fionngal, stormy Selma’s king ? 35
 On a day we grappled together
 On Mealmor, and great was our strife ;
 Woods fell ‘neath the struggle unyielding ;
 Mountains quaked, streams turned from their
 course ;
 On three days the strife was renewed ; 40
 Strong warriors shook behind arms.
 On the fourth, said Fionngal the king,
 ‘ Ocean’s chief has fallen in the glen.’
 ‘ He has not,’ was my own reply.
 ‘ Let Cuchullin yield to the chief 45
 That is stronger than mountain blasts.’
 ‘ Is it I !’ said the blue-eyed hero,
 ‘ I shall yield to no man alive.

Cuchullin, like him, shall be dreadful
In battle, or stainless in death.' 50

Son of Fithil, take thou my spear,
Strike, in dust and gloom, Seuma's shield ;
Thou'l see it on the wall of spears ;
No signal of peace is its sound.

Son of Fithil, strike Seuma's shield ; 55
Call warriors from thicket and grove."

He at once struck the spotted shield,
Every thicket and grove replied ;
The alarm through the forest sped,
Startling deer and roes in the heath ;
Curtha leaped from the sounding rock ; 60
Conal moved with his trusty spear ;
Faobhi left following the hinds ;
Cruthgeal turned to Tura of feasts.

Hear, Ronan, the loud shield of battle ;
Cuchullin's high war-signal, Cluthar ;
Calmar, from the ocean come o'er ;
Come over in thy armour, Luthar ;
Son of Foinne, stern warrior, rise ;
Come, Cairbre, from echoing Cromleac ; 65
Bend thy knee, Fiochi of feasts ;
Come, Cormac, from Lena of streams ;
Stretch thou thy graceful form, Caoilte,
Speeding on thy journey from Mora,
Whiter than the foam that is spread 70
On a sea under stormy blasts.

The braves of high deeds could be seen
Moving down from their winding glens,
Every soul burning high at thought

Of the wars that were waged of old— 80
 Their eyes flashing fire, bending fierce
 On the dark foe of Innis-fail ;
 Every strong hand grasping a sword ;
 Like lightning the gleam of their steel.

Like a stream through a rocky glen, 85
 They came from the brows of the hills,
 Every chief in his father's arms ;
 His dark-frowning heroes behind him,
 Like the gathered water of waves
 Around the red lightning of heaven. 90
 The ring of arms was heard at each step ;
 The barking of greyhounds rose high ;
 Songs were stifled in every mouth,
 As each warrior sought the strife.

Cromleac shook on the mountain's face, 95
 As they took in their march the heath ;
 They stood on the slope of the hill,
 Like the vapour of autumn, hoar,
 That closes round the uplands all,
 And mingles its head with the sky. 100
 “All hail,” said the leader of chiefs,
 “To the race of the narrow glens !
 All hail to the hunters of deer !
 Other pastime rises ahead ;
 A foe upon the verge of ocean 105
 Doth rapidly compass the shore.
 Shall we smite these from Lochlin's waves,
 Or Erin resign to the foe ?
 Say, Conall, conductor of men,
 Great chief in the breaking of shields, 110

When battling with men from the east,
Wilt thou raise up thy father's spear?"

"Cuchullin," he calmly replied,
"Conall's spear is in battle keen ;
It would joy give, and raise my fame, 115
To be slaying the hundreds fast ;
But though my hand inclines to war,
Yet my heart is for Erin's peace.

Greatest champion of noble Cormac,
See the ships of our foemen rising, 120
Rising on the verge of the shore,
Like a grove on Lego of braves ;
Like a grove are the strangers' ships,
Swaying to and fro in the wind.

Cuchullin, Conall is for peace ; 125
Give tribute to Suaran of ships ;
Even Fionngal would shun the strife,
The high chief of Alba's brave race—
Fionngal, that would scatter the brave,
Like blustering tempests the grass, 130
When Cona's mountain-torrent roars,
And Morbheinn is shrouded in clouds."

"From my presence in peace!" said Calmar ;
"Let Conall to his murk hills flee ;
Let his spear contend with the hinds, 135
'Stead of meeting in arms the brave ;
Chase thou the spotted elk on Cromla ;
Let thy arrow pierce Lena's roes.
But thou, son of glorious Seuma,
Great leader of heroes and men, 140
Rout and chase Lochlin's race of ships,

Break the host of strangers from ocean,
Till no vessel rise on the brine,
By the aid of canvas or oars.

On the wild sea of Innis-torc

145

Let the strong wind of Erin rise,
Propelling the black squall on high—
Let me fall by spectres in death,
If I'd follow the deer as soon

As the hard, hot battles of gashes.”

150

“Son of Mathas, I ne'er declined

The conflict with shields, and was close
To my friends in the strife with spears ;
Though I was, I courted no praise.

In my presence battles were gained,

155

We triumphed, and raised the pursuit.

But thou, son of Seuma, the brave,

Mind Cormac and his place of old ;

Give tribute to Suaran and land,

Till Fionngal with succour arrive.

160

If thy soul have pleasure in strife,

There the arm that will raise the spear.”

“Delightful to me,” said the chief,

“Is the clangour of swords and shields.

Like thunder among the dark hills,

165

When slow falls the soft vernal rain.

Let Erin's warlike children rise,

Every warrior in brightness move ;

Pass speedily over the heath,

Like sunbeams on the mountain's brow,

170

When the west winds rise from the waves,

Heavily carrying the clouds.

The sound breaks on Morbheinn of heights,
And the leafless oaks of the wild.

But where are my resolute friends, 175

Aye the stay of my hand in danger ?

Where Cathbaid of the brightest look ;

Dubhchomar of triumphs, the chief ?

Hast thou left me, Feargus the peerless,

When this torrent swells by my side, 180

Thou the soul of the feast, and great

In hardships ? Son of Rosa of spoils,

Wilt thou come like a roe from Galmar,

Like a hind from the slopes of hills ?

All hail to the brave son of Rosa ! 185

What sorrow bows thy spirit, chief ?”

“ Cuchullin, four stones have been laid

Upon Cathbaid wrapped in the grave.

My hands have laid low in the dust,

Dubhchomar of the frowning mien. 190

Thou wast, Cathbaid, great son of Armin,

Like a sunbeam bright on the hill ;

And thou wast, Dubhchomar of prowess,

Like a torrent of heaven’s rain.

Muirne, that wast fairest among maidens, 195

Deep thy sleep in the cleft of the rock ;

In darkness fell the people’s love,

Like a star’s night-rays in a glen ;

The wayfarer lonely shall mourn,

As feebly falls the scanty light.” 200

“ Relate thou,” said the blue-eyed hero,

“ How in death fell the warriors bold.

Did they fall on the hill by Lochlin,

Contending with hundreds in arms ?

What else could the heroes detain 205

In the narrow and darksome hall ?”

“ At the oak by the sounding stream,
Cathbaid fell by the sword of Dubhchomar,
Who came to the forest retreat,
And addressed thus the gentle maid : 210

‘ Muirne, that art fairest among women,
Lovely daughter of noble Cormac,
Why thus in the circle of stones,
In the cleft of the rock by thyself ?

A stream murmurs down by thy side, 215
An aged tree sighs in the wind,
That ruffles the face of yon lake ;
Dark clouds cap the tops of the mountains,
Thou thyself like the mountain snow ;
Thy locks flow like mist upon Cromla, 220
When it mounts the face of the steep
In the rays of the western sun ;
Thy pure breast like a pearly cliff
Beside Brano of the hoar falls.’

“ ‘ There,’ said the graceful-haired maiden, 225
‘ But whence art thou, sternest of men ?
Ever lowering and dark thy brow,
Red now is thy large, rolling eye ;
Hast thou Suaran seen on the ocean ?
Hast thou gathered aught of the foe ?’ 230

“ ‘ I am, Muirne, from the lofty hill,
From the wood of the bounding roe,
And nothing have heard of the foe.
Three deer have fallen by my hand,

One fair hand has fallen for thee, 235
 Thou beautiful daughter of Cormac ;
 As my soul do I love thee, Muirne,
 Lovely fair that dost people charm.'

"' Dubhchomar,' said the gentle maiden,
 ' No affection for thee I bear ; 240
 Dark thy brow, still darker thy mind ;
 Thy heart like a rock of the hills.
 For thee, son of Armin, my love,
 Rarest Cathbaid, is Muirne's desire.
 Thy locks are like rays from the sun 245
 When the mist departs from the heights.
 Hast thou met with Cathbaid the chief,
 Young hunter afar on the hill ?
 The daughter of chivalrous Cormac
 Waits her lover back from the chase.' 250

"' And long shalt thou wait for him, Muirne,'
 Said Dubhchomar, glooming in wrath ;
 ' Long, long shalt thou wait for him, Muirne,
 For the fierce-looking son of Armin.
 Look now on this clean-cutting blade, 255
 'Tis sprinkled with Cathbaid's blood o'er ;
 By me thy strong hero has fallen ;
 Long, long shalt thou wait for him, Muirne.
 I shall raise a stone to thy love,
 Thou daughter of blue-shielded Cormac, 260
 In love bend thine eye on Dubhchomar,
 Whose arm is like thunder on high.'

"' Fell the son of Armin in death ?'
 Broke, with voice of love, from the maid.
 ' Did he fall on the towering ridge 265

That was fairest of the sons of men—
 The leader of friends in the chase,
 The enemy of ocean's strangers ?
 Vengeful is Dubhchomar in wrath,
 Most bloody to me is thine arm,
 Mine enemy—give me thy sword ;
 I loved Cathbaid, I love his blood.'

270

" He yielded the sword to her tears ;
 She ran the sharp steel through his side ;
 He fell by his echoing streams,
 Stretched his hand and uttered this cry—
 ' Daughter of blue-shielded Cormac,
 Thou'st closed my career of renown.
 Star of heroes, cold is the sword,
 It is cold in my bosom, Muirne.
 Give me to Moina, the maid,
 My tomb 'mong the people to raise ;
 I'm her dream in the shades of night.
 My fame shall be witnessed in light ;
 But extract the sword from my side,
 For cold do I feel its edge, Muirne.'

280

275

285

" She slowly approached with her tears,
 She extracted the sword from his side ;
 He cruelly rent her fair breast ;
 She fell with her locks spread on earth,
 While sounding the blood issued forth,
 Red-tinging her delicate hand."

290

" Let me hear no more of the maiden,"
 Said the chief of the war in Erin ;
 " Peace be to the souls of the brave
 That were mighty in deeds of arms,

295

Let them hover round my great car,
 Let me see their ghosts upon clouds ;
 Let my soul in battle be strong ;
 Like the thunder of heaven my arm. 300
 When the tumult of war subsides,
 When the glare of my eye abates,
 And my soul reposes anew,
 Then be thou like a moonbeam, Muirne.
 Let each man speed, let the war speed ; 305
 Attend the great car of the chiefs,
 Place two spears by my side together ;
 Raise before me aright the shield ;
 Follow on the plain the war-steeds,
 Their progress is steady and fleet ; 310
 My soul shall be strengthened with joy
 When the battle rages around."

As a hoar, foaming torrent pours
 From the high iron cliffs of Cromlaich,
 When the thunder travels above,
 And night settles grey on the hill,
 And the wan faces of cold ghosts
 Look forth from the skirts of the blasts,
 So fierce, so great, so dread, so swift,
 Moved the valorous sons of Erin ; 315
 Their chief like a great whale of ocean,
 That after it draws the cold waves,
 Expending its strength like a surge ;
 'Neath his movements trembles the shore.

Lochlin's warriors heard the sound, 325
 Like a hoarse, cold torrent in winter ;
 Suaran instantly struck his shield,

And said to Airn's son who was near him,

“ A murmur is heard on the hill,

Like the slow gadding flies of eve;

330

The fierce host of Erin it is,

Or a muttering storm in the grove,

Like the sound on Gorm-meall it seems,

When the tempests of ocean rise.

Son of Airn, take the height with speed,

335

Look out upon forest and heath.”

He went, but soon quaking returned,

With his eyes asquint in his head,

His heart beating against his side,

His speech broken, faltering, slow.

340

“ Arise, sovereign lord of the waves,

Mighty leader of the brown shields;

The dark mountain-torrent I see,

I see Erin's host and their chief.

The chariot ! the chariot of war

345

Rushes over the plain with death;

The shapely, swift car of Cuchullin,

Seuma's son undaunted in straits,

Its stern sweeps adown like a wave,

Or mist round the serrated rocks;

350

All around illumined with gems,

Like the deep round a ship at night ;

Of the shadowing yew the pole,

With seats sustained on polished bones ;

The repository of spears,

355

Of swords, of shields, and of warriors.

On the right side of the great car

Beheld is the proud, snorting horse,

The high-maned, the deep-chested, dark,
Stately prancing son of the hills ; 360
High-sounding, echoing his foot ;
That tosses his forelock on high,
Like mist on the region of elks ;
Brightly shining his gloss, and swift
His travel—Sithfada his name. 365

On the other side of the car,
The irascible, panting horse,
The thin-maned, passionate, strong-hoofed,
The fleet, sniffing steed of the hills—
Dubh-srongeal the name of the war-horse. 370

Full a thousand of slender thongs
Connecting the chariot on high,
The bright polished bits of the bridles
In their jaws amid white foam.
Bright gems flashing victory forth, 375

Bend over the manes of the steeds,
The steeds that, like mist on the moors,
Are bearing the chief to his fame.
More fierce than a stag in their rage,
As strong as an eagle in strength ; 380

Like the turmoil of winter the sound
Upon Gorm-meall smothered in snow.
In the chariot seen is the chief,
The strong, doughty son of the sword,
Cuchullin of the blue-spotted shield, 385

Seuma's son in minstrelsy famed.
His countenance like the bright yew,
His prominent eye spreading high
Under a dark, arched, narrow eyebrow ;

His locks in a flame round his head, 390
 Falling over his manly face ;
 While he draws from behind his spear.
 Escape, great commander of ships,
 Escape from the hero who comes
 Like a blast from the vale of streams.” 395

“ When fled I ? ” said the king of ships,
 “ When fled Suaran of the brown shield ?
 When shunned I the heaviest danger,
 Son of Airn, that wast craven aye ?
 I have borne the wrath of the skies 400
 On a roaring ocean of blasts ;
 I have borne the fury of battle ;
 Then why should I flee from the fight,
 Son of Airn of the feeble hand ?
 Let my thousands rise on the hill, 405
 Pouring like the breakers of ocean
 When the tempest bursts from the cloud.
 Warlike Lochlin shall aid my steel.
 Be ye like a rock on the shore,
 In my own native land of oars, 410
 That raises the pine woods aloft
 In conflict with the storms of heaven.”

Like a sound in autumn, from two hills,
 Towards each other the heroes drew ;
 Like a strong torrent from two rocks 415
 Descending, pouring on the plain,
 Loud, dark, dread in the shock of battle
 Encountered Innis-fail and Lochlin ;
 When chief crashing blows dealt on chief,
 And man fiercely struggled with man ; 420

There steel harshly grated on steel,
 There helmets on high were cleft,
 Blood copiously flowed around,
 Bow-strings twanged on the polished yew,
 Darts hurtled amongst the sky, 425
 Spears hitting alighted beyond.
 Like lightning at night on the hill,
 Like the roaring fury of ocean,
 When the billows run mountains high,
 Like thunder behind the high hills, 430
 Were the tumult and gloom of battle.
 Had Cormac's hundred bards been there,
 In numbers recording the strife,
 They could scarcely fully describe
 The number of corpses and deaths— 435
 The many deaths of leaders and men,
 Whose blood had been poured on the hill.
 Be mournful, ye children of song,
 For Sithaluinn, the noble chief.
 Heave, Eibhir, thy bosom of snow 440
 For the dauntless hero of Ardan.
 They fell like two hinds on the hill,
 By the hand of brown-shielded Suaran,
 When through thousands he moved in strength,
 Like a ghost in the heaven of clouds— 445
 A ghost, upon vapour that sits,
 Half composed of mist from the north,
 When the phantom mariner bends
 A sad look on the tops of the waves.
 Nor slumbered thy arm by thy side, 450
 Chief of the isle of gentle rains;

Thy sword with destruction abroad,
Like the lightning quivering fierce,
When the people fall in the glen,
And the sides of the hills are on flame. 455

Dubh-srongeal went snorting o'er braves,
Sithfada his hoof bathed in blood.
Behind him lay men not a few,
Like a grove on Cromla of floods,
When the squall rushes o'er the heath 460
With a shadowy ghost of night.

Shed tears on the echoing rock,
Gentle maid of the isle of ships;
Bend thy lovely face o'er the deep,
Thou, more pure than a sprite on a knoll, 465
That calmly and slowly ascends,
Like a sunbeam on the hushed hill;
He fell, he soon fell in the battle;
The youth of thy love is laid low
By the sword of mighty Cuchullin. 470

What leaves thee so cold and so wan?
He'll address him to battles no more,
Nor shed the high blood of the brave;
For Treunfhear—young Treunfhear has fallen.
Thou'l see thy love, maiden, no more. 475
His greyhounds shall dolefully howl
At home, when his ghost they behold.
His bow is all stringless and bare;
On the knoll is the wail of death.

As a thousand waves seek the shore, 480
So moved under Suaran his host;
As the shore meets a thousand waves,

So Erin met Suaran of ships.
 There the voices of death arose
 O'er battle's cry piercing and hard, 485
 Shields and mails lay broken on earth,
 The sword flashed aloft in each hand,
 The sound spread from wing to wing
 Of the conflict, bloody and hot,
 Like a hundred hammers by turns 490
 Striking sparks from the glowing forge.
 Who are these on Lena of heath?
 Who of darkest and fiercest mien?
 Who likest a cloud that is mirk,
 Their swords like a fire on the waves? 495
 A gloom overshadows the steep,
 The ocean-rock quakes on the shore.
 Who are they but Suaran of ships,
 And Erin's chief famous in song?
 The eyes of the host look askance 500
 On the chiefs contending on high;
 Night fell on the arms of the braves,
 Concealing the dubious fight.

On the mountain along the heath,
 Daorglas the venison piled— 505
 The venison felled by the men,
 Ere they left the slopes of the deer;
 One hundred collected the heath,
 Ten ignited a blazing fire,
 Three hundred selected smooth stones, 510
 One hundred the venison flayed;
 The smoke of the feast rose around.
 Then thus said the lord of the feast,

Erin's chief of the generous soul,
Reclining half raised on his spear, 515
To the first of bards, Fena's son :
"Caruill from the time of old,
Why for me alone spread the feast,
And the hoary-haired king of Lochlin
Without feast upon Erin's shore? 520
Lochlin's deer are far from the chief,
Far away is his empty hall.
Bear my words to him o'er the heath ;
Ask the ruler of ships to come o'er
From the strife of the plunging waves, 525
To the feast of generous Erin.
He shall hear the sound of the knolls
In the wood under clouds of night ;
High-sounding, boisterous the wind
That descends from his native seas. 530
He shall praise the strains of our harps,
And the songs of our youths on the hill."
Caruill of the peaceful soul went
The brown-shielded chief to invite.
"Arise from thy couch of boar-hides, 535
Suaran, king of deserts, arise ;
The high feast of the shell is spread
Round the blue-eyed leader of Erin."
He replied, like a slow muffled sound
On Cromla, when winds are astir, 540
"Should the daughters of Innis-fail
Come hither with their arms of snow,
With their white bosoms swelling high,
With their bright eyes inviting love,

Here alone would Suaran remain, 545
 Like the thousand rocks of sweet Lochlin,
 Till rises the beam from the east
 That shall light Cuchullin to death.
 Delightful to me Lochlin's wind,
 That arouses great ocean's roar, 550
 Awaking through the straining shrouds
 Remembrance of the giant pines—
 Gorm-meall's pines, of the greenest hue,
 That sway to and fro in the wind;
 Of blood on the conquering spear, 555
 The blood of the fierce, gnashing boar.
 Let Cuchullin tribute bestow,
 Cormac's mansion and its blue shield;
 If not, when the strife is renewed,
 Mine is Fal with its hills and streams." 560

“Mournful is the word,” said the bard,
 “Spoken by Suaran of the brown shield.”
 “Tis mournful to himself alone,”
 Answered Erin's chief, Seuma's son.
 “Caruill, let thy voice be upraised 565
 About the generations past;
 Let the night pass over with song,
 Let us happiness find in grief.
 Many were the youths and fair maids
 Who of yore moved in Innis-fail; 570
 Delightful are lays of the brave
 From the high-sounding cliffs of Alba,¹

¹ The Gaelic name of Scotland to this day—from which it will be proved, as I proceed with this translation, that the poems are Scotch, not Irish, as maintained by not a few.

By Ossian of the sweetest strains,
 When the sound of the chase subsides,
 And the heights of the deer reply
 To the murmurs of Cona's stream."

575

Caruill said, "In the time of old
 The forces of ocean came o'er,
 Ships a thousand on waves from the east,
 To Ullin of the dark-blue hills.

580

The forefathers of Innis-fail¹
 Rose against the men from the north.

Cairbre, the great hero, was there, :

And Cridh-mor, the fairest of men ;

Though estranged about the white bull
 That was seen on Ben Guilbuinn's brow,

585

Each asserting his better claim.

"They went side by side under arms ;
 Death followed the strokes of their steel ;
 The rovers of ocean succumbed.

590

Who more chief than the mighty men,
 Cridh-mor and the valiant Cairbre ?

Better they'd not heard of the bull
 On motley-hued Guilbuinn of heath !

They saw him again on the mount,
 And the bitter contest renewed.

595

"At Lubar each other they smote ;
 Cridh-mor fell on the grass in blood.
 Cairbre came to the festive hall,
 To Braigh-soluis of gentlest voice,
 The hero's own excellent sister.

600

¹ An old name of Ireland.

Of Cridh-mor were the maiden's thoughts,
 The youth whom in secret she loved,
 Whose absence in warfare she mourned,
 Awaiting him back from the strife. 605

From her elegant robes was seen
 Her proud breast, like the moon of night,
 When her outermost edge is rounding
 From the deepest gloom into light.

As sweet as a harp was her voice 610
 When raised in the music of grief,
 Hers was the eye like a star.

‘When, love, wilt thou come in thy arms?’

‘Take thou, Braigh-soluis,’ said Cairbre,
 ‘Take the strong, spotted shield of battles, 615
 Place it in the hall against rust ;
 Of the arms to me it was direst.’

Her warm heart beat against her side ;
 Her hue went—she rushed through the heath,
 Found him dead, and died on the hill. 620

Here, Cuchullin, repose their dust ;
 This graceful yew springs from their grave.

Braigh-soluis from the sea was pure,
 Cridh-mor from the mountains was fair.

The bards shall remember them both, 625
 Long as ocean flows through the strait.’

“Sweet, Caruill, to me is thy voice,”
 Said the blue-eyed leader of Erin ;

“Sweet, bard, are thy words on the hill,
 Concerning the times of renown ; 630

They resemble the dropping rain,
 When the sun looks bright on the wold,

When the shadows flit o'er the heath,
And the breeze is balmy and slow.
Strike the harp, son of Fena, strike ; 635
Praise, Caruill, my loved one afar,
That beam of Dunscathaich¹ of waves,
The white-bosomed, mild-beaming fair,
Whom I left in her people's isle,
The young helpmate of Seuma's son. 640
Dost thou raise thy beauteous face
From the rock to look for my sails ?
Thou'l't espy but the empty sea,
Whose white billows are not thy lord,
Leave the rock, the night is around ; 645
Round thy head are the winds of the hills.
Unvictorious I'll not return,
While the struggle lasts in the glen.
Conall, with descriptions of battles
Let the loved of chiefs be forgotten ; 650
The sweet fair with the golden locks,
The daughter of high renowned Sorglan."

To which Conall calmly replied :

" Set a watch on the strangers of ocean,
Place a company in yonder grove, 655
To observe the movements of Suaran.
Cuchullin, my soul is for peace,
Till arrive from Alba² of hills,

¹ Still the name of a village in the Isle of Skye.

² Let me ask the reader again to take notice of this Alba, the Gaelic name for Scotland still, and from which Fionngal and his warriors are expected to arrive to aid the Irish in their struggle with the Danes. This testimony of the

Brave warriors with Fionngal the king,
Their chief in the wars of the glens." 660
He sounded, in warning, the shield,
The watch moved along the hillside,
The people lay down in the heath,
'Neath the wind and the stars of night ;
The ghosts of the fallen in battle 665
Hovered round upon gloomy clouds ;
While far through the stillness of Lena
The wail of the dying was heard.

poems as to the country of Fionngal and Ossian is surely of more weight than all the *traditions* to the contrary which the Irish possess.

FIONNAGA L.

DUAN II.

CONALL lay by a sounding stream,
'Neath an oak with its branches bare ;
Against a stone o'ergrown with moss
The commander reclined his head.
Among the heath, in a black pall, 5
He o'erheard a voice of the night.
Apart from his men though he lay,
The son of the sword knew no fear.
The warrior beheld in his sleep
A red stream from the mountain's brow ; 10
Cruthgeal sat on the fiery beam,
One who fell renowned in the glen,
Overcome by Suaran of ships,
While battling in arms with the brave.
His face was like the moon's pale beam ; 15
His robes were the clouds of the hills ;
His two eyes were like coals of fire ;
In his breast was a ghastly wound.

“Cruthgeal,” said the undaunted Conall,
 “Son of Geugal from the high hill, 20
 Why art thou so pale from the battle,
 So mournful, thou breaker of shields ?
 ‘Tis not fear that leaves thee so wan ;
 What has changed thy appearance, Cruthgeal ?”
 Half seen and bursting into tears, 25
 He stretched his large hand o'er the brave,
 While he raised with effort his voice,
 Like Leug’s wind in rushes or heath.

“ My soul is, Conall, on the hill,
 My corse beneath the waves of Erin. 30
 Never more shall my voice be heard,
 Nor my footsteps on earth be seen ;
 I’m like wind on Cromla of heath,
 Like the shadows that fall from the clouds.
 Conall, son of Colgar, great chief, 35
 I behold the shades of the slain,
 Death’s cloud on the valley of Lena ;
 Erin’s sons are falling around.
 Leave quickly, great lord of the feast,
 This region of ghosts ; be not slow.” 40
 Like the moon waxing dark in heaven,
 He took himself off on the wind.

“ Stay,” said the illustrious Conall,
 “ My own faithful, my dark-red friend ;
 Abandon that fire-beam, great chief. 45
 Where dost thou abide on the mount ?
 Oh stay, son of Cromla of winds !
 On what knoll of the greenest slope,
 In what cave is thy dwelling-place ?

Where dost thou repose in deep sleep ? 50

Wilt thou not in the storm be heard,
In the pouring of hosts from battle ?

When shall thy bravery be seen ?
On the hillside weak is a ghost."

Conall of mildest speech arose ; 55

He stately went forth in his arms ;
He sounded brave Cuchullin's shield ;
The warrior sprang up at the sound.

"Wherefore," said the chief of the car,
"Comes Conall of blows from the heath ? 60

Had my spear been lifted to slay thee,
Grief would weigh on my spirit, chief.
Speak thou, son of Colgar, the brave ;

Thy words are like the shining sun."

"Son of Seuma, through the black night 65

Cruthgeal came from the mountain cave ;
The stars could be seen through his form,
While he raised with effort his voice.

He was the messenger of death,
And solemnly spoke of the grave. 70

Seek peace, chief of Erin of arms,
Or flee from the ocean o'er Lena."

"His mutterings by Conall were heard !"

Said Erin's chief, noted for worth ;

"The stars brightly shone through his form ! 75

Son of Colgar, that seekest peace,

"Twas, hero, the wind in thy ear,

And the sound of streams round thy head.

Or if Cruthgeal indeed was seen,

Why not brought him under thy sword ? 80

Didst thou ask him about his cave,
 About the wind-borne traveller's hall ?
 'Neath the sword, through his word of mouth,
 What knowledge he had could be gained,
 Though but small was that knowledge, Conall ;
 To-day he was here on the hill, 86
 Nor distant his course ; he was bad,
 To foretell the death of the men."

"The movements of ghosts are on clouds,"
 Said Conall of the greatest sense ; 90
 "Fallen heroes are seen on the wind ;
 Their abodes are the mountain caves ;
 In their rest they commune together,
 And speak about the deaths of men."

"Let them speak about the deaths of men, 95
 Every man's but the chief of Erin's.
 I'll not flee from Suaran of ocean ;
 If I must fall, my grave shall rise
 Near the plunging waves amid song.
 Tears will fall from the hunter's face ; 100
 Around Brai-gheal sorrow shall twine,
 The lovely fair with the high breast.
 Not death should be dreaded but flight ;
 Fionngal has seen my feats in battle.
 Idle ghost of the pointed peaks, 105
 Thyself at this moment reveal ;
 Come thou on the lightning of heaven ;
 Let me see my fate in thy hand ;
 I'll not flee from Suaran, thou ghost,
 Airy shade of the hollow wind. 110
 Arise, son of Colgar, and strike

The high-sounding, the bossy shield ;
 'Twixt two spears it is seen on high.

Let stern heroes instantly rise

In the war, the battles of Erin.

115

How long in his coming across

Is Fionngal from the windy isle ?

I will, Conall, fight in this battle,

And fall by the swords of the brave."

The sound spread along the descent ;

120

Gallant heroes rose under arms,

As break the dark sides of the waves,

When the deep is heaving with storms ;

In greatness they stood on the heath,

Like oaks with their foliage crowned,

125

When the wind amid frost is heard,

Whirling dry leaves through the glen.

The edges of clouds greyed on Cromla ;

Day trembled upon ocean's brow ;

The blue mist floated o'er the heights,

130

Hiding Innis-fail and its people.

"At my war-cry instantly rise,"

Said the leader of the brown shields.

"Arise, men of Lochlin of waves ;

Erin, stricken, has left the hill ;

135

Pursue them through Lena of glens,

Take, Morlamh, the mansion of Cormac ;

Let them yield to conquering Suaran,

Ere my sword shall give them a grave—

Vain are threatenings of death in Erin."

140

They rose like a swarm from the sea,

When the waves are dashed on the shore.

Like a thousand streams was the sound,
When they meet in beautiful Cona,
Their cataracts breaking from night 145
In the dazzling rays of the sun.
As a close gloomy shadow moves
O'er the dusky moorlands in autumn,
So lowering, dark, dense, without number,
Moved in silence the sons of Lochlin. 150
Like a tawny boar on the mount,
Strode in arms the great king of swords ;
At the side of the brave his shield,
Like fire on the hillside at night,
When the world is dark, silent, void, 155
And the traveller, scared, eyes askance
The spectre disclosed by its gleam.
Seen in mist are the cliffs beyond,
And the stately oaks which they grew.
A gust from the blustering ocean 160
The mist on the mountain dispersed ;
Descried were the brave sons of Erin,
Like a rock 'gainst the waves of oars,
When the seaman, strayed from his course,
Bewails the lost light of the sky. 165
" Go, Morlamh, with uttermost speed,"
Said the king of lofty-hilled Lochlin ;
" Offer peace to men under flight ;
Lo ! yonder they stand on the hill.
Grant such peace as I give to kings, 170
When their heads have bowed to my sword,
When their heroes have fallen in strife,
And their maidens weep in the glen."

With high-sounding and stately steps,
Morlamh, the son of Sathar, came
To address the great chief of Erin
In the midst of assembled braves.

“From Suaran take peace and give tribute,”
Said the hero of vaunting words;
“Such peace as he giveth to kings, 180
When their people have fallen in strife.
Leave Erin of rivers and plains,
Thy wife, and slim dog of the deer,
Brai-gheal of the fair gentle breast,
And Luath that behind leaves the wind. 185
Offer these, for weak is thy arm,
Submit; be not forward, and live.”

“Tell thou to Suaran of the shield,
I ne'er yielded, nor shall I yield.
To that chief I shall give the ocean,
To his people a grave in Erin.
For that day will never come round
That shall see my love taken north;
Nor shall flee, in Lochlin of hills,
The tall stag of the chase from Luath.” 195
“Vain, warrior of the great car,”
Said Morlamh, “are thy arms 'gainst the king,
The king that, with ships from his forests,
Could lift the isle that caused the strife;
So small is Erin of green knolls
To the lord of the stormy main.” 200

“In words I must yield to Morlamh,
My sword to none living I yield.
Erin shall be subject to Cormac,

Long as life in myself remains. 205

Conall, foremost leader of men,

Thou'st heard the vainglory of Morlamh.

Wilt thou peace give to men from ocean,

Mighty breaker of the strong shields ?

Ghost of Cruthgeal of feeble deeds, 210

Why hast thou predicted my death ?

Let me sink in the small dark house,

'Mid the solace of mighty song.

Raise, ye conquering sons of Erin,

Each sharp-pointed arrow and spear ; 215

Smite Lochlin's warriors from the north,

Like a spirit down from the sky."

Gloomy, resolute, shouting, dense,

They mingled in the cloud of battle,

Like mist in a glen of deep gloom,

220

When a storm from behind the hills

Comes o'er the still calm of the sun.

Cuchullin himself strode in arms,

Like a ghost in the skirts of clouds,

His red robe of the lightning sharp,

225

And each strong wind in his large hand.

Caruill was in the wood above,

With the sounding horn in his hand,

To rouse the great souls of the people

With the stirring numbers of song. 230

"Where," said the sweetest of lips,

"Where hast thou stretched thyself, Cruthgeal ?

Lying on the earth without strength ?

Thy fair house has no fragrant shell ;

Sad in tears is the wife of Cruthgeal,

235

A stranger in the hall of grief.
 Who is she like a gleam on the hill,
 Before the dark face of the foe ?
 Who else but Deo-greine of bright locks,
 Cruthgeal's wife of the fairest breast ? 240
 Her hair is on the wind behind her ;
 Red her eye and feeble her voice.
 All pale in the deer's run is Cruthgeal ;
 His form is in the mountain's cave.
 He shall come to my ear in sleep ; 245
 But his voice in the night is weak,
 Like a bee circling round a stone,
 Or fly in the border of light.
 But Deo-greine has fallen like a cloud,
 In the grey of morning on Ardbheinn. 250
 Lochlin's sword has rent her fair breast ;
 The loved of heroes has fallen, Cairbre ;
 She has fallen who gave thee renown,
 The sweet beautiful stem of youth."

When Cairbre heard the sound of grief, 255
 He moved like a great whale of ocean ;
 When he saw without life his daughter,
 He rushed through the thousands of men,
 Till Lochlin encountered his sword.
 The battle flamed from wing to wing, 260
 Like a hundred winds in great woods,
 In Lochlin of mountains and waves ;
 Like a hundred fires in great pines
 On the hills of the land of ships.
 So roaring, ghastly, numerous, vast, 265
 The people went down under arms.

Cuchullin cut men down like thistles,
While Erin recoiled before Suaran.
Curthach fell by his wasting hand,
And a gallant hero in Cairbre. 270
Brave Morlamh for ever is low;
Thou hast quivered in death's throes, Caoilte,
With thy blood upon thy white neck,
And thy yellow hair spread on earth.
On the spot where the hero fell, 275
He had oftentimes spread the feast,
Often played sweet strains on the harp;
His stag-hounds on the knoll gave tongue,
When the youth of the narrow glens
Put its string on the hunting-bow. 280

All-conquering Suaran went on,
Like a cold, swollen stream of the hills,
When the banks with suddenness fall,
And the wreck is borne through the glen.
Strong against him Cuchullin stood, 285
Like a great rock that parts the clouds,
When the winds battle round its cliffs,
And the firs on its sides are swayed,
And the hailstones rattle on crags;
The rock stands aloft in its strength, 290
Sheltering the sweet glen of Cona.
Even so was the brave Cuchullin,
Sheltering the people of Erin.
Like a fount pouring water forth,
So the blood flowed around the chief. 295
Erin fell on the region of ghosts,
Like snow on the heath in the sun.

“Men of Erin,” all pale said Cruthmal,
“Lochlin follows hard in pursuit.
Why stand like a reed against waves ? 300
Flee quickly to the height of deer.”
He fled like a deer on the ridge,
His spear like a stick by his side.
Not many through panic took flight
With Cruthmal of evil advice. 305
They fell in conflict with the brave,
By the rock on the heath of Lena.
On the ample car of bright stones
Seen aloft was the chief of Erin ;
He slew a hero from the north, 310
Then spoke to Conall of the feast.
“Conall, foremost leader of men,
Who hast trained to warfare my arm,
Though Erin’s men flee from the field,
We shall still contend with the foe. 315
Caruill, from the time that is gone,
Lead my friends to yon knoll above.
Conall, remain thou by my sword,
To shelter from loss the retreat.”
Conall leaped on the spacious car ; 320
Seen aloft were the heroes’ shields,
Like the moon waxing dark with gloom,
Proud sister of the stars of heaven,
When she travels dun from the east,
Boding ills in the minds of men. 325
Sithfada strained up the ascent,
And Dubh-srongeal of fleetest pace ;
Close after them drawing the people,

Like waves round the great whale of ocean.

On the high-shouldered side of Cromla 330

Stood sorrowing the men of Erin,

Like a great wood burned to its stems,

Under night-wind rising on cairns,

Far separate, withered and brown,

Without leaf to rustle on bough. 335

Cuchullin sat under an oak,

With the wind in his flowing hair;

Mute the chief of slow-moving eyes,

When the watchman of ocean came,

Moran, son of Fithil the bard. 340

“The ships! the ships, they appear,

From the high isle of dusky hills!

With Fionngal the leader, the chief,

Mighty breaker of the brown shields;

The white foam is around the ships, 345

The masts are with sails like a grove

Amid heavy, gathering clouds.”

“Blow, thou wind,” said Cuchullin, “blow

From the mild, misty isle of ocean;

Come, thou brave, to the death of thousands,

King of Selma of great renown! 351

Thy sails are, my friend, unto me

Like the rays of morning from clouds,

Thy ships like the light of the sky,

Thou thyself like a burning fire 355

That brightly appears in the night.

Conall, entertainer of chiefs,

How pleasant are our friends in grief!

Night is gathering around the hill;

But where can be Fionngal of ships? 360
 Let us here in the deepening shade
 Wait the stars and the rising moon."

The wind on the forest came down,
 The sound of the waterfalls rose,
 Rain fell upon Cromla of heath, 365
 The red stars twinkled through the clouds.
 Very sad by a streamlet's side
 Sat the leader of Erin's chiefs;
 Conall, the son of Colgar, was near,
 And Caruill from departed times. 370

"Unlucky is thy hand, Cuchullin,"
 Said greatly helpful Seuma's son—
 "Unlucky is thy hand, Cuchullin,
 Since thy comrade by thee was slain;
 For Fearde, the son of noble Amuin, 375
 How great was my love on the mount!"

"Wherefore, Cuchullin, son of Seuma,
 Fell the breaker of the blue shields?
 I remember," said Conall of blows,
 "Amuin's noble son of great chiefs;
 He was tall and comely in form, 380
 Like the bow of clouds in the sky."

"The great chief of a hundred glens,
 This same Fearde from Alba came o'er;
 Raised his sword in the hall of Muire, 385
 Where much friendship was to him shown;
 I went to the chase with the hero,
 Our place was together the heath.

"Deudgeal was the wife of brave Cairbre,
 The great chief of Ullin and Ardbheinn. 390

The light of beauty was her dower,
But her heart was the seat of pride ;
Her love was for the beam of youth,
Amuin's son of the noblest mind.

“ ‘Cairbre,’ said the soft-handed fair, 395
‘Divide to me half of the herd ;
Silly man, I shall quit thy hall ;
Give me, Cairbre, half on the mount.’

“ Cairbre said, ‘ Let the son of Seuma
Give thee half the herd on the heath ; 400
His soul is the dwelling of right.
Charming wife of the graceful steps,
May I never see thee again !
Radiant bough of vaunting, adieu ! ’

“ I went and divided the herd ; 405
The bull was like snow on the hill.
I awarded the bull to Cairbre ;
Wrath arose in the loved of chiefs.

“ ‘Son of Amuin,’ said the bland fair,
‘Cuchullin has clouded my soul. 410
Let me, chieftain, hear of his death,
Or I’ll be without life on Lubar.
My ghost shall intrude on thy sight,
And my hatred pursue thee, love.
Then pierce thou Cuchullin all through,
Or leave me disgraced on the mount.’

“ ‘ Fair-hand,’ said the valorous youth,
‘ Wherefore should I slay Seuma’s son ?
The dear friend of my thoughts is he ;
Wherefore, bough, should I raise the sword ? ’
For three days she indulged in tears ; 421

On the fourth the youth raised the shield.

“ ‘I shall smite my sincerest friend,
But first let me fall on the hill.

Alone, could I see on the heath,

425

Cuchullin, my friend, and his grave ?’

We fought upon the hill of Muire,

But our swords avoided to wound ;

Their backs alone grated on mails,

And targets of dark-blue bosses.

430

Deudgeal, who was by, with a sneer

Very promptly upbraided Fearde,

‘The weapon is weak in thy grasp,

Weak thy sword, and feeble thy youth,

Unequalled thine age to the steel ;

435

Leave the victory with Seuma’s son,

The chief is like a rock on Mealmor.’

“ Tears were seen in the hero’s eye,
As feigning he spoke on the mount.

‘Cuchullin, raise high thy great shield,

440

Take care of thyself, man of might ;

My spirit is burdened with grief,

Great warrior, thy blood to shed.’

“ My sigh rose like wind from a cave,

While on high flashed the keen-edged steel ;

The beam of war fell ; on the hill

Fearde sleeps without life in the grave.

Unlucky is thy hand, Cuchullin,

Since fell the brave youth by thy sword.”

“ Sad, chief of the car, is the tale,”

450

Said Caruill of mournful death-song ;

“ It bears back my soul with a grudge,

To the vanished times that have been,
To the days that declined of old.
Of Comal oft heard was the tale,
How he slew the maiden he loved;
Yet victory smiled on his steel,
In conflict with the strong in arms.

455

“Comal was from Alba itself;
O'er a hundred hills he was chief; 460

From a thousand streams drank his deer;
His dogs were heard on a thousand moors;
His face was gentle as a maiden's;
His large hand to heroes was death.

He loved a maiden who was fair, 465
Feasting, conquering Conluich's daughter.

A sunbeam was she among women;
Blacker than the raven her locks;
Her stag-hounds were fleet on the shore;
On the hill-wind heard was her bow; 470

Her affection was set on Comal.

Oftentimes their eyes met in love;
On the hill they practised their hands;
Pleasant was their converse in secret.

But the maiden was loved by Gruamal, 475
The chief of Ardbheinn of great clouds,
The rival of blue-shielded Comal.

He watched when she strayed from her friends.
One day, when fatigued from the chase,
While mist hid the wood from the people, 480
Comal and the faint maiden met
In Ronan's cave by the tossed waves,
Comal's dwelling-place from the chase,

His own, and that too of his arms.

On high were a hundred bright shields,
A hundred strong helmets of steel.

“‘Continue thou here,’ said the youth,
‘Gealmhin of the beautiful look,
A sunbeam rarely in a cave;
I see a large stag on the steep;
I go, but shall quickly return.’

‘I’ve fears of a foe,’ said the maiden,
‘Of Gruamal unhonoured in song;
He takes pleasure in Ronan’s cave;
But here, among the arms concealed,
I’ll wait thy return from the chase.’

“He went to Mora of the deer.
To show him how constant her love,
She accoutréed herself in arms,
And hastened her steps to the shore.

He supposed her to be his foe;
Against his breast his heart beat high;
His ruddy complexion turned pale,
While dimness came over his sight.

He bent to its utmost his bow;
From his bow-string an arrow flew;
Gealmhin, his beloved, fell in blood.

He came with wild footsteps and look,
Called the daughter of Comluich of ships,
Without answer from knoll or moor.

‘Where art thou, beloved of the brave,
Lovely maid of the heavy locks?’
Her heart was quivering in death,
Round the arrow left by his hand.

485

490

495

500

505

510

‘Daughter of Comluich, is it thou?’ 515
He exclaimed, and fell on her neck.
A hunter found the youthful pair,
On the place of deer by the waves.
Darksome were his days for his love,
His steps oft frequented her grave. 520
A ship came with foes from the north;
He assailed and routed the strangers,
Seeking death in midst of the host.
Who could break his steel on the shore?
A stray arrow his vitals pierced; 525
He threw his dark arms on the plain;
His sleep is, Gealmhin, by thy side,
Where the winds of ocean contend.
Both their graves the mariner sees,
As he mounts the tops of the waves.” 530

FIONN GAL.

DUAN III.

“SWEET to me are the words of the song,”
Said Cuchullin, the ready hero ;

“Sweet a tale of departed time,
Like the still dew of tranquil morn

On the shrubs and knolls of the roe,

When slowly uprises the sun

On the hushed sides of the hoar Bens ;

Far away an unruffled lake,

Blue-spread on the floor of a glen.

Caruill, raise again thy voice,

10

That arose with joy in the hall,

When Fionngal of the spotted shield

Kindled at the deeds of his sires.”

“Fionngal, thou that dwellest in battles !”

Said Caruill of the sweetest voice,

15

“Many were thy feats and death-strokes ;

‘Neath thy wrath fell Lochlin of ships,

When thy face was bare as a maiden’s.

They looked upon the face of youth,
And smiled at the hero at first. 20
But death was in his arm in battle,
His strength was like Lora in flood ;
Like a thousand streams his dark chiefs,
In the strife with shields round the hero,
When they captured the king of Lochlin, 25
And carried him down to his ship.
Fury swelled in his cruel heart ;
In his savage vindictive soul,
Dark-plotting the young man's death.
None ever in battle prevailed 30
O'er Starno but Fionngal himself.
Sitting in his hall in the north,
In the wooded land of the Galls,
He called Sniobhan hoar to his side,
And words of deceitfulness spoke 35
To Sniobhan, who could raise the chant
At Loduinn's Cromlec on the hill ;
When the spectre-stone heard the hero,
Battle turned the flight of the chiefs.
“ ‘ Go, Sniobhan of the hoary locks,’ 40
Began Starno of the brown shield,
‘ Go to Ardbheinn of dusky hills,
To Selma encircled by waves ;
Make known unto Fionngal the king,
The brightest 'mong a thousand chiefs, 45
That I'll give him the sweet-voiced maid ;
More lovely ne'er heaved a smooth breast ;
As white is her arm that is round,
As the foam upon ocean's brow ;

Mild of soul the bough of brown hair. 50
 Let the king who never succumbs,
 Come speedily over the waves
 To the maid of retiring steps.'

“Sniobhan of the hoary locks came.
 Fionngal and his people set out ; 55
 His fond soul went before the chief,
 To the brown-haired maid of the north.

“‘A hundred all-hails !’ said dark Starno ;
 ‘Great king of the mountains, all hail !
 And welcome, ye friends of the chief, 60
 Sons of the isle of lofty hills.
 For three days in this self-same hall,
 Partake of the feast and prepare ;
 Three days among deer and dun boars,
 Give the chase over vale and plain. 65
 The lovely maid shall hear your praise,
 Where behind the people she dwells.’

“Designing the death of the men,
 He dispensed the feast and the shell.
 The king, who suspected his guile, 70
 Wore his armour and grasped his spear ;
 Fear fell on the agents of death,
 They fled from the eye of the king.
 The voices of joy rose around ;
 Sweet music was played on the harp ; 75
 The bards sang of triumphs in battle,
 And the hero’s high-bosomed love.
 Ullin, the spokesman of the king,
 Raised echoing Cona’s sweet voice ;
 He praised wooded Lochlin’s daughter, 80

And darkly-frowning Morbheinn's king.
 Lochlin's daughter o'erheard the strain ;
 She came forth from her secret hall,
 And drew near in her loveliness,
 Like a young moon from clouds on the sea. 85
 Her beauty arrayed her like light,
 Her steps were the music of song.
 When the modest maid saw the king,
 The sigh of her bosom arose ;
 With downcast blue eye she surveyed 90
 The king of Morbheinn of hoar hills.

“ When the third morn's rays lit the west,
 Shining upon the hills of boars,
 Starno of the swarthy brow went
 With Fionngal of the shield and wounds. 95
 Half the day they spent in the chase ;
 The spear of Selma was bathed in blood.

“ Cruel Starno's daughter came near,
 Her blue eyes with tears in a flood ;
 She came with her low, gentle voice, 100
 To the chief, the brave king of Morbheinn.
 ‘ Fionngal from the fathers of chiefs,
 Put no trust in the pride of Starno ;
 His warriors are hid on the hill,
 In the dusky wood under arms ; 105
 Shun the forest of death, O king,
 Man of might from the isle of oars !
 Remember thou Lamh-geal of heroes ;
 From her sire shield the white-bosomed maid,
 King of Morbheinn compassed by waves.’ 110

“ Undaunted the youth went along,

His warriors in steel by his side.
By his hand fell the tools of death ;
Gorm-meall of heath echoed round.

“ In front of the banqueting hall,
The people convened from the chase.
Fierce Starno was there with his spear,
His black brow like a cloud on cliffs,
His eye like the red fire of night.

‘ Come thou,’ said Starno of the strife,
‘ Snowy face of the blandest speech.
Not light was thy talk with the king ;
On her hand is the people’s blood.’

“ She came with her red eye in tears,
And beautiful locks spreading round ;
Her fair bosom, white as the foam
On a mountain stream, heaved a sigh.
Starno struck his steel in her side ;
She fell like a wreath on the hill,

When it slips from Liath-lic of heath,
And the sound breaks o’er the dark slope,
When the woods and the heights are still,
And echo floats over the glen.

Fionngal turned his eye on his people,
And his people rose under arms.

The strife was like that of the waves.
Lochlin was routed in the storm.

The king raised the ashy-pale maid,
The sweet fair of the gentle soul.

He set sail on a stormy sea. 140

Her grave is on the plain ‘neath Ardbhleinn ;
A pile marks her dark, narrow house.”

“All hail to thy soul, youthful bough!”
Said Cuchullin of the strong arm ; 145
“All hail to the bard of sweet lips,
And the heroes extolled in song !
Mighty in his youth was the king,
His sword is resistless in age ;
By him Lochlin again shall fall,
Mighty chief of forests and glens. 150
Show emerging from clouds thy face,
Thou moon, and give light to his sails.
If a strong ghost be in the sky,
Sitting upon clouds with full power,
Turn aside his ships from the rocks, 155
Thou that ridest upon the blast.”
It was thus spoke noble Cuchullin,
By a sounding stream of the hills—
When wounded and pale from the flight,
Calmar the son of Mathas came ; 160
He came in his blood from the field.
The brave hero leaned on his spear,
For his arm was weak from the battle,
Though his soul at the time was strong.
“Welcome, son of Mathas,” said Conall, 165
“Thou’rt welcome to thy friends, great chief ;
But why breaks that sigh from thy breast,
Man in whom there never was fear ?”
“There was not, Conall, nor shall be,
Chief in war of the sharpest steel ; 170
The joy of my soul is in strife ;
Sweet to me are the people’s conflicts.
I am come of a warlike race ;

Of hundreds my sires had no fear.

Cormar was the first of my line ; 175

He rejoiced in the storms of waves ;

His black, slender vessel was fleet

On the wings of the ocean winds.

Once a spirit embroiled the night ;

Rocks sounded, dark ocean swelled ; 180

The wind put in clouds, and the night-

Lightning flashed on the face of waves ;

He took fright and returned to shore.

But ashamed to have owned to fear,

He instantly struck for the deep, 185

To seek the wroth sprite of the clouds.

With three youths to conduct the ship

Through the dark mist around her course,

And his naked sword in his hand,

The leader of chiefs with his sword, 190

With his sword sought to pierce the gloom ;

Approaching near the spectre's head,

It left both the wind and the sky ;

The stars and the placid moon rose.

“ As daring as my sires am I ; 195

Calmar shall be ranked with the brave.

Danger aye shall flee from his sword ;

’Tis only the bold who succeed.

Ye children of generous Erin,

Leave Lena of bloodiest heath ; 200

Collecting the remnant together,

Join Fionngal, high chief of the brave.

I hear Lochlin moving in arms ;

I will take the conflict in hand ;

My voice shall be loud as a storm ; 205
 They shall deem it a host of thousands.
 But keep me in mind, son of Seumia ;
 Remember thou Calmar when low.
 When Fionngal prevails on the mount,
 With stones keep my name from decay ; 210
 Every age that after me comes
 Shall hear of Calmar and his fame.
 In the run of the deer, his mother
 Shall rejoice to look on his grave."

"Son of Mathas," answered the chief, 215
 "I ne'er left thee, nor shall I leave ;
 I joy in the danger of shields ;
 I ne'er yielded, nor shall I yield.
 Conall and Caruill, both alike
 From the time that vanished of old, 220
 Conduct ye our friends through the heath,
 Erin's warriors of old renown.
 When the noise of battle subsides,
 Ye shall lifeless find on the plain
 Two heroes, who went down together 225
 To combat with thousands in arms.
 Son of Fithil of bounding steps,
 Cross Lena towards sounding ocean ;
 Let the king of Morbheinn come o'er,
 Let the chief come hither with speed, 230
 With light to the people anew,
 Like the sun at the close of storms."

Morning greyed on Cromla of heath ;
 The men of ships debarked on shore.
 Against the heroes Calmar stood, 235

Great of soul in his silly pride.
 Pale of hue was the chief of strokes ;
 Faint he leaned on his father's spear,
 The spear from Lara of the brave,
 Which himself had brought to the field, 240
 When the soul of his mother was sad,
 The soul of forlorn Alcletha,
 As she bowed in her night of grief.
 He caught up the spear, but he fell,
 Like a tree that falls on the hill. 245
 Cuchullin stood alone in battle ;
 Like a rock in sand stood the chief,
 Like a rock on which ocean pours ;
 The white foam on its crest above,
 And the strong cold waves by its side, 250
 While the rocks of heath echo round.
 From grey mist upon the hoarse waves
 The ships of white sails were descried,
 The ships of Fionngal of brave chiefs ;
 Like a tall dark grove were the masts, 255
 Swaying to and fro on the deep.

Suaran saw them from the elk's slope,
 And returned from pursuing Erin.
 As ocean pours from shores around
 The hundred sounding isles of boars, 260
 So loud, so lowering, broad and vast,
 Moved Lochlin to oppose the king.
 Slow, sorrowful, drooping, in tears,
 His spear in the heath by his side,
 Cuchullin lay off in the wood, 265
 Like a fire that shines before death.

The hero was grieved for his friends,
 Calm asleep on the field of battle ;
 He dreaded the face of the king,
 Who had hailed him from strife so oft. 270

“ Many are my heroes on earth,
 Erin’s chiefs of comliest looks ;
 They who were sprightly in the hall,
 When the sound of banqueting rose ;
 Never more shall I see their steps 275

On the heath, in the face of storms ;
 No more hear their voice in the chase
 By the stream of deer on the hill ;
 Still, silent, and lowly, asleep,
 Lying without light are my friends. 280

Idle shades of the mighty dead,
 Meet me when alone on the heath,
 When the wind bends the tree of Tura,
 And weird sounds are heard on the mount.
 Let me lie far apart in secret, 285

Unknown to man of speech or song ;
 Stone nor tomb for me shall not rise
 By the shore of waves nor in glen.
 Mourn thou for me among the dead,
 Bra’geal of the beautiful locks ; 290

Be mournful, and my fame departed.”

Like this was the talk of the chief,
 As behind him he put the hill.

In his ship that was large and strong,
 The king greatly stretched out his spear ; 295
 An earnest of death in the field.
 His steel was like flame on a rock,

When lies upon Mealmor of heath
The sharp lightning sent by a ghost ;
When the traveller lone is afraid,
And the moon grows dark in the sky. 300

"The conflict is o'er," said the king;
"I see its sad work on the plain,
Red-stained with the blood of my friends.
Mournful, O Lena, is thy heath ! 305
Mournful is the oak upon Cromla.
Strong hunters have fallen in their strength,
And with them the brave son of Seuma.
Fillan and Roinne, my two sons,
Loudly sound forth the horn of Fionngal ; 310
Ascend the faces of the knolls,
And sound it to the lake of Jorguil.
Call the foe from the grave of Lamhdearg,
The chief who abode there of old.
Be your voice like that of your father, 315
When aroused to engage in battle.
Let me here await the strong chief,
Let me wait on Lena for Suaran,
Let the hero come on alone,
Or along with hundreds in arms ; 320
Let our foemen come all together,
Tell them we are valiant and strong."

So mighty, so dark, and so brave,
 Came the race of ships down the slope. 330

The king great and strong was before them,
 Sternly proud in his arms and shield ;
 Wrath burned in his dark fearless face ;
 His eye was like moor-fire in storm.

When Fionngal saw Starno's great son, 335
 He remembered the maid of snow ;
 Suaran, when she fell, was in tears
 For the maiden of lovely cheek.

Towards him went Ullin of songs,
 To bid him to the feast on shore ; 340
 Pleasant to the king of great hills
 Was remembrance of his first love.

Ullin of the aged step came
 And accosted the son of Starno.

“ Man of might from the distant land, 345
 Who seemest in thy mail and arms
 Like a rock in the midst of waves,
 Come thou to the banquet of chiefs ;
 Spend a day in peace at the feast ;
 To-morrow be breaking the shield, 350
 Where in conflict shall press the spear.”

“ To-day,” said Starno's son, “ to-day
 Shall I break the spear on the hill ;
 To-morrow thy king shall be foiled,
 When Suaran and his chiefs shall feast.” 355

“ To-morrow the hero shall feast,”
 With a smile, said the king of Morbheinn ;
 “ To-day I shall fight on the hill,
 And break the unmatchable shield.

Ossian, stand thou close to my arm ; 360
 Gall, man of might, raise thy sword ;
 Draw, Feargus, thy sharp twanging bow-string ;
 Throw, Fillan, thy terrible lance ;
 Raise your shields aloft like the moon,
 When obscured by clouds in the sky ; 365
 Be your spears like heralds of death,
 Follow, follow myself and my fame ;
 Be ye like a hundred in battle."

Like strong winds in the oaks of Morbheinn,
 Like a hundred streams from the heights, 370
 Like clouds lowering gloomy and dark,
 Like great ocean rolled on the shore ;
 So vast, so noisy, dark and fierce,
 Met heroes in wrath upon Lena.

Their shouts were on the mountain heights, 375
 Like thunder in the night of storms,
 When the clouds break in Cona of glens,
 And a thousand ghosts wildly shriek
 On the lone cross-wind of the hills.

The king bounded on in his strength, 380
 Like the merciless ghost of Treunmor,
 When he comes in the whirlwind's blast
 To Morbheinn, his loved fathers' land.
 The oaks on the mountains resound,
 The rocks of the hills fall before him ; 385
 Through the lightning himself is seen ;
 From hill to hill are his great steps.
 Bloody in the field was my father,
 When he wielded his sword with power ;
 In remembrance the king had his youth, 390

When he fought the wars of the glens.

Roinne sped like the fire of heaven ;
All dark in the conflict was Gall ;
Feargus went like wind on a mount ;
Fillan moved like mist at a knoll ; 395
Ossian was a rock in the combat ;
My soul was all zeal for the king.
Many and dismal were the deaths
'Neath my great sword's gleam in the strife ;
For my locks were not then so white, 400
Nor did tremble my hand with age ;
The sight of my eye was unquenched,
While my foot would travel for aye.

Who could tell of the deaths of men ?
Who relate the deeds of great chiefs, 405
When burned in his wrath the great king,
Wasting Lochlin along the heath ?
Shout on shout from the people rose,
Till night settled down on the waves.
Faint, trembling, and stricken like deer, 410
Lochlin gathered on Lena of heath.
We sat round melodious harps,
By Lubar of sweet, peaceful waters.
The king, who sat nearest the knoll,
Was listening to tales from the bards ; 415
In their strains were the sires of great deeds,
Each hero had his ancient lay.
With the forest wind in his hair,
As he leaned on his shield, the king
Had his thoughts on the days of strife, 420
The times made renowned by the brave.

By his side stood against a tree,
 Oscar of the terrible sword,
 With his eye fixed on Morbheinn's king,
 While he pondered on his great deeds. 425

“Son of my son,” said the king,
 “Oscar of battles in thy youth,
 I saw thy invincible sword,
 And was proud of my glorious sires.

Aye follow their fame who are gone; 430

Like thy fathers also be thou,
 Like Treunmor, first chief of the brave,
 Like Trathal, the father of heroes.

In their youth in battles they fought;
 In the songs of bards is their praise. 435

A torrent be thou 'gainst the strong;
 To the feeble in arms as mild
 As a breeze on the plains of grass.

Such in life was Treunmor of shields,

Such Trathal the leader of chiefs, 440

Such e'en were my deeds on the hill;

The needy was aye at my arm,

The timid grew bold 'neath my steel.

Seek not thou the conflict of shields,

Nor shun it on the mountain-side.” 445

· · · · · · ·

· · · · · · ·

· · · · · · ·

“Fillan and Oscar of brown locks,
 Heroes light of foot on the steep,
 In my presence ascend the hill;

See Lochlin of ships from the strife.
 In the distance I hear their flight, 450
 Like a sound coming far from waves,
 Or woods on the heights. Be not slow,
 Before they take ship for the north,
 With swiftness eluding my sword.
 Many a brave hero and chief 455
 Of Erin lie darkly in death ;
 The fathers of battle have fallen,
 The sons of Cromla of loud thunder."

The darkly-hued warriors sped,
 Like the cold cloud-chariots of ghosts, 460
 When the race of the wind come swiftly
 To sadden the people with death.

Then Gall, the son of Morni, rose
 Slowly, like a rock in the night ;
 His voice was like a hill's great stream, 465
 While gleamed to its point his hard spear.

"Son of battles," began the chief,
 "King of Morbheinn, of cups and shields,
 Let the bards on the hill extol
 Erin's friends of terrible ire. 470
 But, king, put thy sword in its sheath ;
 Give, chief, to the people their right ;
 We wither and go without fame ;
 Thou'rt thyself the breaker of shields.
 When morning rises on the hill, 475
 Look from far above on our deeds ;
 Let Lochlin feel, on ocean's verge,
 That a sword without fear pursues ;

Then the bard shall speak of myself.
 This custom was ever observed
 By our shielded sires in the field ;
 This custom was thine also, chief,
 In conflicts where the spear was plied."

“Son of Morni,” replied the king,

“I greatly exult in thy fame ;

Rule the war in the heat of strife,
 A strong spear shall be at thy back.
 Raise your voices, ye sons of song,
 And heavily close up my eyelids.

Let me lie near the sounding waves,
 'Neath the whirling gusts of to-night.

If thou be, lovely face of snow,
 On the slope in midst of thy people ;
 If thou sittest, as I suppose,
 On wind round the pines of the hill,
 Come thou to my night-visions, Lamhgeal,
 Float over my soul when I sleep.”

Many were the voices and harps
 That rose high in the strife of song,
 That praised the high deeds of the king,
 The leader of chiefs, and his sires.
 At times could be heard in the strains
 Ossian's name and speed on the field.

Often have I fought and prevailed
 In the battles of flight with a spear ;
 Now tearful, dejected, and blind,
 My steps are with spiritless men.
 Great Fionngal, no more shall I see

480

485

490

495

500

505

Thyself, nor thy warriors, king !
The roe is nibbling on thy tomb, 510
King of Morbheinn of greenest mound !
Great leader of heroes and conquests,
Thy soul shall rejoice to be named
At Cona of the lofty hills.

FIONNAGL.

DUAN IV.

WHO comes with a song to the mount,
Like the rain-dropping bow of Lena ?
'Tis the maid with the voice of love,
Toscar's daughter of the white hand.
Often hast thou heard from me lays, 5
Often hast thou shed sweetest tears.
Wilt thou come to the wars of the strong,
To the doings of blue-mailed Oscar ?
When shall darkness depart from Cona,
Of the great, the high-sounding streams ? 10
My days have been passed amid battles,
My age is in anguish and gloom.
Daughter of the arms like snow,
I was not so mournful and blind,
I was not so dark and forlorn, 15
When Eimhir-aluinn gave me her love,
Eimhir-aluinn of the brown locks,
Brano's daughter of the white breast.

She was wooed by a thousand heroes,
To a thousand her hand she refused ; 20
The chiefs of the sword were rejected ;
In her eye most graceful was Ossian.

I went to solicit the maid,
To great Lego of darkest hills.
Twelve heroes accompanied me thither, 25
Sons of Morbheinn of rocks and streams.
To Brano the company came,
To Brano of the sounding mail.
"Whence are," said the generous chief,
"The young men under arms and steel ? 30
Not easily won is the maid
Who refused Erin's blue-eyed chief.
All hail to the leader of hosts,
The son of Fionngal of great fame !
Happy the maiden who accepts thee, 35
Mighty hero of dauntless deeds.
If twelve virgin daughters were mine,
Thou, warrior, shouldst have thy choice."

He opened the hall of the maid,
Eimhir-aluinn of the brown locks. 40
Joy rose in the souls of the people,
The daughter of Brano to greet.

High above on the ridge of deer
Was Cormac, himself and his men.
Bright he looked on the mount in steel ; 45
His sword was like fire in his hand.
Eight warriors were his on the hill ;
The sun brightly shone on their steel.
There were Colla and Dura of wounds ;

There Taog and invincible Freasdal ; 50
 With Daora of unsullied deeds,
 And Daol' the disposer of battles.
 With Ossian were eight valiant men,
 Who came over ocean unscathed.
 Ullin, the son of battles, was there, 55
 And Mulla of arms and brave deeds ;
 Noble Scallag of gentle hand ;
 Fierce Oglan, and Cairdeal the fearless ;
 Dubh, the son of Roinn', brow of death,
 Stood close by my side on the height ; 60
 Why last should be named gallant Ogair,
 Man of fame on Ardbheinn of heath ?

Ogair encountered dreadful Daola
 Side by side on the field of heroes ;
 The strife of the chiefs was like wind 65
 On a wild sea of foamy waves ;
 Till Ogair remembered his sword,
 The weapon most prompt to his hand ;
 Nine times he deep-wounded his foe.
 Three times did I break Cormac's shield, 70
 Three times did the chief break his spear ;
 His beautiful head rolled on earth.
 The fierce storm of battle was turned ;
 The friends of the hero took flight.
 He who then would have told me, maid, 75
 When I strove with the foe in light,
 That sorrowful, abject, and blind,
 I'd be passing in gloom the night,
 Had need to be strong in his mail,
 Unmatched in the use of his sword. 80

On Lena of dark-frowning heath,
 The cadence of music sank low ;
 The strong wind was shifting above,
 The leaves rustled under brown trees ;
 My thoughts were of beautiful Eimhir
 When she came in effulgent light,
 Her blue eyes suffused with warm tears ;
 She stood on the edge of her cloud,
 While her voice was feeble and low :

85

“Rise, Ossian, with promptitude rise !
 Save the son of my love from swords ;
 Save Oscar, young chief of the people,
 With Northmen engaged in the glen,
 Beside Lubar of scanty streams.”

90

She suddenly sank in her cloud.

95

With spear in my hand, on the heath
 I donned my hard armour and shield ;
 As usual I hummed in my mouth
 Tuneful lays of departed chiefs ;
 Loudly sounded my dusky mail ;
 Lochlin, far away, heard the noise
 And fled, while my brave son pursued ;
 I called, like a slow-moving stream :

100

“Oscar, come across over Lena ;
 No farther indulge the pursuit,
 Though my arm and steel are behind thee.”
 He came, and pleasant in my ear
 Was the sound, in his steel, of Oscar.

“Why restrained my father my hand,
 Till death had o'ertaken them all ?
 Dark, fierce, by a stream of the hills,

105

110

They turned against my sword and Fillan's.
I regarded the ghosts of night ;
Some remained till dawn in the wood."

Like night-wind from the face of ocean, 115
Rushing fast o'er the sands of Mora,
So dark with his host shall come Suaran,
In silence o'er Lena of heights.

Cold ghosts have been shrieking beyond ;
I've seen fires of death upon Lora. 120

Let me wake from sleep the strong hero,
Who smiles ev'n amid crashing blows.

He resembles the sun in heaven,
To which yields the high-raging storm.

From his dreaming the chief awoke, 125
And leaned upon the shield of Treunmor,
The great ample shield of dark hue,
Which his father raised on the field.

There came in his sleep to the hero,
Snowy-face in her airy form ; 130

She came from the distance of ocean,
Slow-moving alone o'er the waves ;

Pale her aspect, as he supposed,
While the tears trickled down her cheek.

She raised her dim hand from her robe, 135
From her robe of the desert's clouds ;
She raised her hand o'er the men's chief,
In silence averting her look.

"Why, daughter of Starno, in tears ?"
Said Fionngal, with labouring breast ; 140
"Why so pale, thou loved of the brave,
Graceful wanderer of heaven's clouds ?"

She went off on the wind from Lena,
 Leaving him in the skirts of night ;
 She mourned for her kindred in Erin, 145
 To fall on the mountain with day.
 As from slumber the hero woke,
 In his thoughts was the phantom maid.
 Oscar came with hurrying steps,
 With his hard dark shield on his side. 150
 Morning's light arose in the east,
 Greying the wide expanse of ocean.
 "What good hath the foe under fear ?"
 Said the leader of chiefs, uprising ;
 "Have they fled from the hill to ocean, 155
 Or remained under arms on Lena ?"
 "Why inquires the king for the people ?
 On the cold wind I hear their voices."
 "Speed quickly over Lena, Oscar,
 And rouse from their slumbers the brave." 160

At Lubar's curved stone stood the king ;
 Three times he raised high his great voice ;
 Deer startled on Cromla of woods,
 Rocks, mountains, and rivulets quaked.
 Like a hundred streams from the heights, 165
 Which thunder and leap under foam ;
 As gather for the storm, and pour
 Shifting clouds on the azure sky,
 The sons of the desert hills met
 'Neath the voice and sword of the king. 170
 Pleasant to the men of his land
 Was the voice of Morbheinn's armed king ;
 Him often they followed to battle,

Returning with the spoils of war.

“To conflict advance,” said the chief, 175
 “Ye children of high-sounding Selma ;
 Go with death on the hill to thousands ;
 Cumhal’s son shall behold the strife,
 My sword shall be near on the mount,
 To shelter my people from harm. 180
 Let me never witness your need,
 And the son of Morni in steel,
 Great leader of the brave in battle,
 Whom the bards in their songs will laud.
 Slender ghosts of departed chiefs, 185
 Who ride upon mist in the wind,
 Take up those who fall without life,
 And carry to Cromla the heroes ;
 Waft the brave, thou cold wind of Lena,
 O’er the deep to their native land ; 190
 Let them slowly come to my visions,
 To gladden my spirit in peace.

“Fillan and Oscar of brown locks,
 Youthful Roinne of gory steel,
 Move with courage under the hero, 195
 The son of Morni, great in pursuit ;
 Be your swords like his in the strife ;
 Mark his terrible deeds in battle ;
 Keep your friends from harm on the heath,
 Remembering each perished one. 200
 My brave friends at times shall be seen,
 After falling in Erin’s battles ;
 Pale ghosts shall be seen on the hill,
 On the clouds and cold winds of Cona.”

Like a cloud of deep gloom in storm, 205
 And its edges flaming with lightning,
 Chased westward by the morning's beams,
 The king of Selma took the pass ;
 Like a wraith the gleam of his arms ;
 Two large spears he bore in his hand ; 210
 His grey locks were spread on the wind,
 While sideways he looked on the strife.
 Three bards went along with the chief,
 To convey his words to his people.
 On Cromla above sat the king, 215
 And we moved as he moved his sword.

With his sword like fire in his hand,
 With bright cheek, and his eye in tears,
 Joy rose in the spirit of Oscar,
 As softly to Ossian he spoke : 220
 "Chief in war of the hardest blows,
 Loving father, hear thou my voice.
 Withdraw to the strong king of Morbheinn ;
 Permit me to share in thy fame.
 Should I fall hereabouts in battle, 225
 Remember thou white-breast like snow,
 That sunbeam, alone whom I love,
 Toscar's daughter of the white hand ;
 Her bright face is on yonder rock,
 Bending slowly over a stream ; 230
 Her soft locks fall around her head,
 While her voice for Oscar is raised.
 Tell her that I am on the mount,
 That my ghost is pale on the wind,
 That yet I shall meet on swift clouds 235

My beloved, noble Toscar's daughter."

"Lay, Oscar, lay me in the grave.
I'll not yield in strength to the brave ;
The first under arms in the strife ;
Take knowledge from me how to conquer ; 240
But, Oscar, remember my sword,
My bent bow, and horn of a deer.
Beside the grey stone at its head,
My tomb shall be narrow and dark.

Oscar, no beloved one have I 245
To intrust, my son, to thy care,
Since fell Eimhir-aluinn of heroes,
Brano of the sharp weapon's daughter."

Such converse was ours on the heath,
When Gall of the shield raised aloud 250
His great voice, like the roar of ocean
When it grows on the mountain wind.
Slow the chief raised his father's sword,
And we moved to the wounds of death,
Like a bubbling wave of the brine, 255
A white, swelling, high-sounding wave.
Like a black rock o'ertopped with surge,
Foemen met, and the people fought,
Man with man, and steel against steel ;
Shields sounded, and men lay on earth. 260
As a hundred hammers fall fast
Amid sparks on the glowing forge,
So the arms of the people rose,
And such was the sound of their swords.

Gall went like a whirlwind on Ardbheinn, 265
With destruction to foes in his sword.

Suaran was like a raging fire,
 In Gorm-meall's heath flaming all o'er.
 Why should I relate in my song
 Each death that was caused by the spear? 270
 My sword at the time, in the field,
 Like lightning arose in my hand.
 Oscar, most terrible wast thou,
 My strong son, my noblest and best;
 My spirit rejoiced on the mount, 275
 To witness thy deeds in the strife.
 The people fled on Lena's side;
 We followed and slew in pursuit.
 As a stone bounds from rock to rock,
 Like axe in a wood sounding high, 280
 As from peak to peak rolls the thunder,
 Pealing, broken, doleful above,
 Blow on blow and wound upon wound
 Came from mine and from Oscar's steel.
 Suaran compassed the chief of swords, 285
 The son of Morni, head of the people;
 Like the great sea around Innistore,
 When fills with high flood-tide the ocean,
 The king half arose on the height,
 He half grasped the spear in his hand: 290
 " Go, Ullin, go quickly, my bard;
 Bear my words in haste o'er the field,
 Bring remembrance of war to Gall,
 Of his sires who have bowed their heads;
 Enliven the conflict with song, 295
 With song that reanimates battle."
 Great Ullin of aged step came,

And spoke to the chief without guile :
 "Great chief of the high-bounding steed,
 King of spears and the slashing sword, 300
 Strong hand in straits, high heart, unyielding,
 Mighty chief of the sharpest steel,
 Smite the foe, nor leave a white sail
 Of his to go forth on the deep.
 Let thy arm be like thunder, hero, 305
 Thy red eye like fire in thy head,
 Thy heart like a rock in thy side,
 Like lightning in the night thy sword ;
 Raise thy shield like the light of death,
 Great chief of the loud-snorting steed." 310

The heart of the hero rose high,
 But Suaran came over with battle ;
 He broke the bossed buckler of Gall ;
 Selma o'er the summit took flight.
 The king of Morbheinn moved under arms ; 315
 Three times he raised high his great voice ;
 Cromla answered from the place of storms ;
 The men of the desert hills stood
 With their faces bowed to the earth,
 Ashamed in presence of the king. 320
 Like a cloud, the store-house of storms,
 That rush on bright days from the hill,
 When the fields are athirst for rain,
 And the streamlet winds through the glen ;
 In peace are its movements above, 325
 Though near is the crash of the storm.
 Suaran beheld the king of Morbheinn,
 And turned from pursuing his hand ;

He leaned darkly upon his spear,
While his red eye rolled o'er the field. 330
Majestic and calm was the chief,
Like a hoary oak beside Lubar,
That lost its live branches of old
By the vivid lightning of heaven ;
It bends o'er a stream of the hills ; 335
Like the wailing of locks its sound,—
'Twas thus stood the king of brown shields,
Until slowly he upward moved
O'er Lena of bloodiest heath.
Round the hero his thousands thronged, 340
Darkness fell on the plain beyond.

Fionngal was like the fire of heaven,
Shining 'midst the brave of his people,
With his great strong heroes behind him.
His mighty voice arose with power : 345
"Raise my ensigns aloft," he said,
"Outspread them on the heights of Lena,
Like a flame seen over a peak ;
They shall sound on the wind of Erin.
Ye sires of the great roaring streams 350
That roll down through a thousand glens,
To my words hark, ye men of might :
Gall of the potent arm and sword ;
Oscar of the battles to come ;
Conal of the blue-spotted shield ; 355
Gallant Diarmid of the brown locks ;
Ossian, king of music and song,
Be thou near to thy father's arm,
In battle cutting hundreds down."

On its staff we raised up Deo-greine, 360
 The great flag of the king of swords.
 Joy rose in the soul of each chief
 When its folds were spread on the wind ;
 Its blue surface was gemmed with gold,
 Like the great azure vault of night 365
 When the stars look down from the sky.
 Each chief had a flag of his own,
 With strong heroes around his steel.

“Behold,” said the king of free shells,
 “The dividing of Lochlin on Lena ! 370
 Like dark broken clouds is their marching,
 After rain has fallen in Erin ;
 They resemble a hoary wood
 Half-burnt on the sides of the hills,
 When seen to a third is the lightning, 375
 Passing over its topless boughs ;
 Let each chief, the friend of your chief,
 Of our foemen select his share,
 Nor suffer the sires of the hills,
 The race of the isle of dark boars, 380
 To return o'er the deep to their land.”

“The seven heroes,” said Gall, “be mine,
 Who came from the waves of Loch Lain.”

“Let tall Eric of the brown locks
 To Oscar, the son of Ossian, come.” 385
 Conal said, “Let Innis-nan-Con,
 The fierce hero, fall to my hand.”

Brown Diarmid said, “Mudan, or I,
 Shall prostrate be laid on the shore.”

I, to-day so abject and blind, 390

Chose Torman's fair-combating king ;
 I promised to win from the hero
 His blue sword and his dusky shield.

“ Great luck and success to each chief ! ”

Said Fionngal of manner benign ; 395

“ Suaran, noisy king of the waves,
 Thee have I chosen, man of might.”

Like the wind from a hundred hills
 Rushing strong through a hundred glens,
 Breaking dark on the standing rocks, 400
 Quickly moved Selma's mountain race,
 While Cromla of ghosts echoed round.

Who the number of deaths could tell
 When we closed on the wooded shore ?

Noble daughter of Toscar of ships, 405
 Bloody were our hands in the strife ;
 The face of the foe fell in battle,
 Like the banks of strong-rushing Cona ;
 The chiefs and their pledge went together ;
 We triumphed and slew in pursuit. 410

At Bran of the hill's roaring stream,
 Oft has sat the maid of white hands
 When fatigued from the chase ; thy breast
 Rising fast, as full as the form

Of a swan afloat on the lake, 415
 When she glides on before the wind ;
 When slowly her white wing is raised
 As the breeze encircles her side.

Thou'st, maid, on the high mountain, seen
 The sun setting red under clouds,
 Darkness closing fast round the hill, 420

While blasts issued forth from the gloom ;
 Thou hast seen the fall of great rain,
 When the thunder rolled through the glen,
 And ghosts from the waves came on lightning,
 When the might of hills sought the plain, 426
 The loud mountain-torrent the shore.
 Even so was the great noise of battle,
 Gentle maid of the arms like snow.
 But why do thy tears fall to earth, 430
 Fair daughter of Toscar of chiefs ?
 With Lochlin's maidens be the grief,
 'Twas their people failed in the strife.
 Bloody were the swords of blue edge,
 Of the race of great chiefs from Cona. 435
 I am tearful, blind, under grief,
 With the semblance of chief no more ;
 Give me, O Lamh-geal, thy tears !
 I raised all their graves on the hill.
 'Twas then, by the hand of the king 440
 Fell a chief, to his grief, in battle ;
 With his grey hair spread on the slope,
 He raised his sad eye to the king.
 "Is it thou ?" said the son of Cumhal,
 "Faithful friend of the maid like snow ! 445
 I witnessed thy tears at the time,
 When the lovely-faced maiden fell.
 Thou foe to the foes of my love,
 Hast thou fallen beneath my sword ?
 Raise, Ullin, raise high his renown,
 Put Mathon in earth in the glen ; 450
 Give to song the old hero's name,

Who much grieved for the high-born maid.
To my soul sweet the maiden of ships,
Who sleeps beneath the hill of Ardbheinn." 455

Cuchullin o'erheard from the hill
The strong crashing of swords in battle,
As he sat on Cromla of caves,
Deep-grieved to be foiled in battle.
He called Conal of the sharp sword, 460
And Caruill from the time of old.

Towards him the grey warriors came,
Upraising their shields on the field ;
They came, and before them beheld
The stream of warlike ocean's tide, 465
When the black tempest wakes above,
High rolling the billows ashore,
On the sands of the desert glens.

Cuchullin's soul burned at the sight ;
A frown gathered dark on his brow ; 470
His hand was on his father's sword,
And his red eye on Erin's foes.

Three times did the chief stretch his step,
His step Conal three times restrained.

"Chief of the isle of dull grey mist, 475
'Tis the king who conquers the foe ;
Seek not thou to divide his fame,
And himself like storm on the hill."

"Go, Caruill," the leader resumed,
"Go quickly to the king of Morbheinn ; 480
Bear greeting to the chief of glens,
The slayer and waster in battle.
When Lochlin subsides like a flood

After rain, when slackens the strife,
Be thy voice with praise in the ear
Of the conquering king of Selma. 485

Give the hero the sword of Cathbaid,
The sword that won spoils from the brave ;
Cuchullin deserves not the arms
Of sires who ne'er yielded in battle. 490

Ghosts of Cromla, of lonesome rocks,
Ye great souls of the brave departed,
In my grief be around my steps ;
To me speak from the caves of rocks.

I'm a beam that has shone and passed ; 495
Like mist on the mount is my fame ;
When the breeze of morning blows strong,
Seen all o'er is the slope of deer.

Speak not, Conal of arms, to me ;
My name has left the homes of heroes ; 500
I shall sigh on Cromla of storms,
Till my steps are lost in the heath.

And thou, Braigh-geal, of lovely look,
Be wretched and sad for my fame ;
Unvictorious I'll not return, 505
To thee, sunbeam, who hast my love."

FIONN G A L.

D U A N V.

On the high-sounding side of Cromla
Conal spoke to the chief of the car:

“ Why this sullenness, son of Seuma,
When our friends pursue on the field ?
Greatly famed art thou, mighty hero !
Many chiefs have fallen by thy steel.

Oft was Braigh-geal, of bluest eye
And bright locks, all radiant with smiles ;
She went often to meet her lord’s
Return with his braves from the field, 10
When the foe was still in the grave,
And victory shone on her love.

Pleasant in her ear were thy bards,
When thy deeds were floating on song.

See the king of Morbheinn in steel,
Rushing on like the fire of heaven ;
In strength like a torrent of Lubar,
Or a blast that is fierce on Cromla,

When on cliffs branchy trees are bent
By great storms in the midst of night.

20

“Thy people are blessed, king of swords ;
It was thy arm that fought each battle ;
The strongest art thou amid strife,
Thou’rt the wisest in times of peace ;
Then thousands submit to thy word ;
Great multitudes quake at thy steel.
Thy people are blessed, king of swords,
Who com’st from high Morbheinn of glens.

“But who is that dark on the hill,
In the gloom of his thundering course ?
Who but Starno’s son of the shield,
In search of Morbheinn’s mighty king.
See the combat of the two heroes,
Like the noise upon ocean’s face,
When two spectres, met in the wind,
Fiercely fight on the rolling waves.
The hunter afar hears the sound,
Deep and slow, of the warring sprites ;
He sees the ocean coming o’er
From the land of Galls to high woods.”

35

40

Gentle Conal, these were thy words
When the warriors met in strife ;
The strong thunder of arms was there,
Every terrible cleaving blow
Like a hundred hammers swung high
Above the hard forge amid flame.
Dire the conflict of the two kings ;
Gloomy was their frown in the strife ;
Their brown shields were cleft under blows,

45

Sharp-edged swords rebounded from steel ; 50
 But throwing their arms on the plain,
 The warriors instantly grappled ;
 Each large sinewy arm was twined
 Around the great backs of the chiefs,
 As they wrestled from side to side, 55
 With their huge limbs spread on the field.
 When rose the strong ire of the heroes,
 The moss itself quaked 'neath their heels ;
 Green forests, stones, mountains, and rocks
 Shook under the strain of the kings. 60
 At last fell the mighty of ocean—
 Great Suaran of ships was o'ercome.

Like that have I seen upon Cona
 (But Cona I shall see no more),
 Ev'n so have I seen two great knolls 65
 Borne off from their seats in the heath
 By the force of a mountain stream ;
 As they tilted from side to side,
 The trees by each other were caught,
 Till they fell on the shore together, 70
 With heather and oaks from the mount.
 The stream slow returned to its course ;
 Seen red were the ledges beyond.

“ Ye children of far-distant Morbheinn,
 Keep watch on the king of high waves ; 75
 As strong and resistless the hero
 As a thousand waves on the shore.
 No frail hand is he in the strife ;
 His sires were from the times of old.
 Gall, chieftain of the mighty brave, 80

Ossian, leader of sweetest song—
He is the friend of my first love ;
From despondency raise his head.
Oscar, Fillan, and red-haired Roinne,
Follow over Lena the rout ;
Ye in swiftness who leave the wind,
Chase the race of ocean in Erin ;
Let no vessel rise on the waves
From the island of ships and boars.”

They went over the moor like wind ; 90
Fionngal slowly moved like a cloud ;
The sound of the chief was like thunder
When tranquilly falleth the rain
On a summer field, dark and still ;
Like a beam from the sun his sword, 95
Or a spectre star in the night.
He bent his steps to a chief of Lochlin,
And spoke to the hero of waves :

"Who is this so dark under grief
By the rock of the roaring stream—
He who over it cannot leap,
Though comely and faultless his form ?
At his side lies the spotted shield,
His spear is like a mountain pine.
Young hero of the frowning look,
Say, art thou with hatred my foe ?"

"I've come hither from Lochlin, chief,
And strong is my shield in the strife ;
My love is in tears on the hill ;
To her gold locks I'll ne'er return."

“Wilt thou yield, or accept of battle?”

Said Fionngal of the mighty deeds ;
 " In my presence no foe prevails ;
 My kindred are not humble, chief.
 Then follow me, lord of the waves,
 Take comfort on the knoll of feasts ;
 Chase the fleet-footed mountain roes ;
 Be a valiant friend of the king."

" I will not," was the chief's reply ;
 " With the weak was ever my hand ;
 My steel is unmatched on the hill.
 Why yields not the brave to my sword ? "

" Young warrior, I never yielded,
 Nor shall I yield to living man.
 Select thou from my people, chief ;
 Numerous and great is my race."

" Does the king then decline the combat ? "
 Said Orla of the dusky shield ;
 " Fionngal to the young man is equal,
 And he of his heroes alone."

King of Morbheinn of great renown,
 Should I be o'ercome in the strife,
 Raise my dust in the midst of Lena ;
 Let my tomb on the hill be greatest.

Send over the expanse of waves
 To the island of ships my sword,
 To the grief-laden fair, my love,
 Lamh-geal, of the slow-moving eyes.
 She will show the steel to her son,
 While soothing tears course down her cheek."

" Young hero of the mournful tale,
 Wherefore hast thou started my tears ?

115

120

125

130

135

141

Heroes have their day in the field ;
 Their children shall see their large arms
 Amid rust and gloom in the hall. 145
 Highly raised shall thy tomb be, Orla ;
 Thy wife of fair bosom shall weep
 When thy sword is seen on the board."

They fought upon the heath of Lena ;
 Weak in blows was the hand of Orla ; 150
 Fionngal cut asunder the thongs
 That fastened his shield in the combat ;
 Unto earth fell the spotted shield,
 Like the moon on the sea in wind.

" King of Morbheinn, raise up thy arm, 155
 Put, hero, thy sword through my breast.
 Full of wounds, and faint from the strife,
 Strong friends have forsaken my side.
 A sad tale shall come to my love,
 In Lotha's valley of smooth streams, 160
 When she is alone in the wood
 And the soft wind sounds in the trees."

" I'll not rend thee," the king replied—
 " In the strife I'll not rend thee, Orla ;
 Let the gentle fair one behold 165
 Her brave love by the stream of Lotha ;
 Let thy hoary sire see thee whole
 From the conflict of mighty heroes,
 If the chief be not blind with age ;
 Let him hear thy steps on the hill, 170
 Thy strong voice in his distant hall ;
 Let his soul be instantly glad,
 As he feels with his hand his son."

“Never more shall he feel me, king,’
 Said the young man of might from Lotha ; 175
 “I shall fall on Lena of woods ;
 Bards shall hear of my strife in battle.
 ‘Neath my belt is the deep wound of death ;
 It is over there to thee, wind.”

His red blood flowed full from his side ; 180
 He fell among the heath on Lena.
 O'er the hero's throes bent the king,
 While he called for the strong young men.

“Oscar and Fillan, my two sons,
 With will raise remembrance of Orla ; 185
 ‘Neath a flag lay the brown-haired chief,
 Far off from his kind wife by Lotha ;
 Let him here repose by himself,
 In the small rayless house of gloom,
 Far distant from loud-roaring Lotha, 190
 From his hall, his heroes, his love.
 His bow will be found in the hall ;
 Dull men shall endeavour to bend it ;
 His greyhounds will howl in the glens,
 And the boars he regarded rejoice. 195
 The strong hand in battle has fallen,
 The head of great chiefs is no more.

“Raise the voice and the sounding horn,
 Young men without malice from Morbheinn.
 I'll return to Suaran to-night, 200
 And lighten with music his grief.
 Go, Oscar, and Fillan, and Roinne,
 Go quickly o'er Lena of heath ;
 On our foes turn a kindly eye.

But where art thou, Roinne, brave youth? 205
 Thy custom was not to be slow
 When the king of swords for thee called."

"Roinne is," said Ullin the bard,
 "With the shades of the mighty brave ;
 With Trathal, the king of shields, 210
 And Treunmor of the mighty deeds ;
 The young man is prostrate and pale,
 Lying upon the hill of Lena."

"Has he fallen, the fleet in the chase ?"
 Said the greatly famed king of Morbheinn. 215
 "Thou man who couldst bend the strong yew,
 My knowledge of thee was but small ;
 Why has Roinne fallen in battle ?
 Take repose, great hero, on Lena—
 Not long till I see the warrior ; 220
 My great voice shall be heard no more,
 Nor my steps on the hill be seen.
 The bards shall speak of the king's name,
 Of his name the stones of the field.

Roinne is all lifeless and low,
 And his fame has not risen high.
 Strike thou, Ullin, the naked harp,
 Raise a song on the hero gone.
 Farewell, first of men in the field,
 I'll not keep from waning thy light ; 230
 Thou comeliest among the brave,
 I shall see thee no more—farewell!"

The king's cheek was flooded with tears ;
 Terrible was his son in battle,
 His son, who was like heaven's lightning 235

From Ardbheinn to the plain at night,
 When the forest falls in its course,
 And the traveller fails in the dark ;
 But wind shall entomb the fire ;
 Behind the hills the world is dark.

240

“ Why is memory of this grave green ? ”
 Said Fionngal of the festive shells ;
 “ Four stones with moss covered are yonder,
 Round death’s narrow house on the hill.

There let Roinne take his repose,
 Beside braves that were hard in battle.
 On the mount are chiefs of high fame ;
 He’ll not travel alone on clouds.

245

Raise thou, Ullin, a song of old,
 Remembering those in the grave.
 If they never fled from the field,
 My son shall repose by their side,
 By their side in the mountain heath,
 Far distant from the heights of Morbheinn,
 On the echoing plain of Lena.”

255

“ In this place,” said the lips of song,
 “ Sleep the chiefs of heroes in dust ;
 Very still in the grave is Lamh-dearg,
 And Ullin, the king of hard swords.
 Who is she that looks from the clouds,

260

Disclosing through shade her fair form ?

Wherefore is the maiden so pale,
 To whom people yielded on Cromla ?
 Hast thou, Lamh-geal, fallen asleep
 Along with cold foes in the strife ?

265

Brightly favoured daughter of Tuathal,

Thou wast loved by a thousand heroes ;
 Thy love was for Lamh-dearg alone.
 The great chieftain to Tura came,
 And sounded the shield of brown bosses, 270
 When to himself the hero spake :
 ‘Where is Gealachos, my beloved,
 Mighty Tuathal’s peaceable daughter,
 Whom I left in the hall of towers,
 When I smote Ulfada of blows ? 275
 “Turn thou back unto me,” she said,
 “And I under cloud of grief, Lamh-dearg.”
 Her white bosom heaved a calm sigh,
 Her young cheek was bedewed with tears.
 To meet her chief I see her not ; 280
 To raise my soul from ills of war ;
 Very still is the hall of harps,
 Nor bard’s voice on mountain or plain ;
 Even Bran is not what his wont was,
 Shaking at the entrance his chain. 285
 Where is Gealachos, my beloved,
 The gentle daughter of strong Tuathal ?
 “‘Lamh-dearg,’ said Feargus, son of Aodhan,
 ‘Gealachos is on Cromla of storms ;
 Herself and each maid of her choice, 290
 In eager pursuit of the deer.’
 “‘No sound by me, Feargus, is heard
 From wood, hill, or valley of Lena ;
 No antlers appear in my sight,
 Nor keen dogs in the chase of Erin ;
 I see not Gealachos, my love, 295
 Like the moon anew going down.

Go to Allaid of the hoar locks,
 In the bend of the rock, his choice,
 To find if the agèd has heard
 Of Gealachos on the mountain-side.' 300

“ Feargus, the son of Aodhan, went,
 And spoke to the hoary of rocks.
 ‘ Kind Allaid, who dwell’st on the hill,
 Say what has thine agèd eye seen.’ 305

“ ‘ I have seen,’ said Allaid the agèd,
 ‘ Great Ullin, descended from Cairbre.
 He advanced from Cromla of heath ;
 In his deep chest he hummed a tune,
 Like a blast in a leafless wood ;
 He came to the dwelling of towers. 310

“ ‘ ‘ ‘ Lamh-déarg, who art the dread of men,
 Give battle, or thy fame, to Ullin,
 Thou strongest of chiefs that are strong.’

“ ‘ ‘ ‘ Lamh-dearg is not,’ said fair Gealachos,
 “ War’s hero himself is not here. 316
 On the shore he has slain Ulfada,
 And is chief of braves on the mount.
 But my love ne’er yielded to chief ;
 He’ll give battle to Cairbre’s son.” 320

“ ‘ ‘ ‘ Thou’rt charming in features and form,’
 Said Ullin of mightiest deeds,
 “ Lovely daughter of warlike Tuathal,
 Whom I’ll bear to Leug of the hills,
 Cairbre’s hall of the festive shell ;
 The strongest of chiefs shall have Geal’chos. 325
 Three days I shall tarry on Cromla,
 Awaiting for Lamh-dearg of blows,

Till I get from the warrior battle ;
 Geal'chos on the fourth shall be mine, 330
 Should her hero flee from the combat."

" ' Peace, Allaid,' said the chief of Cromla,
 ' To thy dream be in the rock's cleft.
 Blow thou, Feargus, the horn of battle ;
 Let Ullin hear it in his hall, 335
 Rising like a storm in a glen.'

" Lamh-dearg climbed the mountain from Tura ;
 A tune that came not to a close
 Was closely suppressed in his breast ;
 He gloomily stood on the heath, 340
 Like a cloud that changes its hue
 Amid wind on the mountain's brow.
 He threw the signal-stone of battle ;
 Ullin, Cairbre's son, heard its sound ;
 There was joy in the hero's soul ; 345

He seized quickly his father's spear ;
 A faint smile was on his brown cheek
 As the warrior grasped his sword.
 His whistling was heard as he strode
 With ready bare sword in his hand. 350

By Gealachos seen was the chief
 As he rose like mist on the hill ;
 She languidly smote her high breast,
 That was whiter than mountain snow,
 While in silence she wept for Lamh-dearg. 355

" ' Agèd Cairbre of festive shells,'
 Said the maiden of softest hand,
 ' My bow shall be on Cromla's hill ;
 I see a dun hind on the steep.'

She at once set out for the mount, 360
 But her progress upward was slow ;
 The conflict was over with scath.
 Why in numbers relate the strife
 To Selma's king, who has seen hundreds
 Wage the wars of heroes with swords ? 365
 Ullin of the wildest look fell,
 While Lamh-dearg came pale to the maid,
 The daughter of conquering Tuathal,
 The great leader of hosts and arms.
 “ ‘ There's blood, love,’ she said, looking death
 ‘ There is blood on thy side, my hero.’ 371
 ‘ It is Ullin's blood,’ said the chief,
 ‘ Thou maiden like snow on the hill.
 Gealachos, my love, in this place
 Let me lay my back on the earth ; 375
 My soul goes ; I've not lost my fame.’
 Lamh-dearg of the towers went to death.
 “ ‘ Hast thou fallen into sleep profound,
 Chief of Tura of rugged knolls ? ’
 Three days she remained on the field ; 380
 A hunter on the fourth found her dead.
 This grave has been raised o'er the three.
 King of Morbheinn, in this same dust,
 With chiefs of high fame, shall be Roinne,
 His course on the mount will be calm.” 385
 “ In this place let Roinne repose,”
 Said Fionngal composedly slow ;
 “ The voice of his fame strikes my ear.
 Fillan, Feargus, bring over Orla,
 The ghastly young hero from Lotha. 390

Thou'l not lie without equal, Roinne,
And Orla in the grave beside thee.
Let hilly Morbheinn's maids shed tears,
The maids of wave-girt Lotha mourn.
Like saplings on the mountain-slope, 395
Grew the chiefs that were prompt in need.
They fell like the oaks in a glen,
Which lie across streams from the hills,
Withering in the mountain wind.

Oscar, chief of the youthful brave, 400
Thou seest how the men have fallen ;
In battle be thou as renowned,
And extolled by the bards, as Roinne.
Terrible was thy form in battle ;
Gentle wast thou, Roinne, in peace. 405
He resembled the bow of warm rain
That is seen afar in the wood,
When the sun is setting on Mora,
And the cliffs of the deer are still.—
Lie thou, the youngest of my sons, 410
Lie thou beneath the flag on Lena.
We shall fall, how'er great and wise ;
The heroes of war have their day."

Such sorrow was thine, king of arms,
When Roinne was laid in his grave. 415
How great is the sorrow of Ossian,
And thou, foremost chief, without life !
I hear not on Cona thy voice,
I see not thy form with blind eye.
Through many a day and cold night 420
Have I sat by thy grave on the hill ;

I'd feel it with my hand 'neath the cairn,
 And laud thee in strains of the bards ;
 When I'd fancy I heard thy voice,
 'Twas nought but the black squall of night. 425
 'Tis long since the day thou didst sleep,
 Great leader of desperate battles.

At a distance sat Gall and Ossian,
 Along with Suaran of the waves,
 On Lubar's bank of greenest hue. 430
 I attuned the harp to the king,
 Whose brow from the conflict was dark ;
 He turned his red eye upon Lena ;
 The hero was grieved for his people.

Towards Cromla I raised my sight,
 And beheld the great son of Seuma ;
 Dark, slow, and alone were his steps
 From the hill to the cave of Tura.
 Victorious he saw the chief ;
 Grief mixed with his joy on the hill. 440
 On his armour the sunbeams shone ;
 Conal after him calmly moved.
 They dropped behind the sounding hill,
 Like the flame of heath on the mount,
 When the moor-burn travels through night—
 Without light but what itself gives, 446
 And pursued by the sounding wind.

By a stream descending in foam,
 His hall is in the rock of caves,
 With a bent tree over it leaning,
 And the west wind blustering high
 Against the face of cliffs and rocks. 450

There sat the high leader of Erin,
 The son of Seuma of free shells,
 With his thoughts on the strife of feats, 455
 While the tears trickled down his cheeks.
 The courageous conquering hero
 Was grieved to have lost his respect.
 Thou art, Braigh-geal, so far away,
 Thou'l not raise at this time the hero. 460
 Could he see thy warm graceful form,
 His spirit with might would return ;
 His concern will be for his fame,
 And the sunbeam who waked his love."

But who comes with the locks of age? 465
 Who but the chief of mighty song?
 "Caruill, from the time that has flown,
 Sweet thy voice as a harp afar
 In the banqueting-hall of Tura.
 Thy word is pleasant as the dew 470
 That falls calm on the flats of hills,
 When the sun breaks forth from the mist.
 Caruill, from the time that has gone,
 Why com'st thou from the son of Seuma?"

"Ossian, hand of might with the sword, 475
 The honours of song are thy own,
 To me thou hast long been well known,
 High chief in the wars of the brave ;
 Thou'st oft struck the harp to the maid,
 Eimhir-aluinn of greatest worth ; 480
 Oft raised, with the people's regard,
 Thy sweet voice in the songs of heroes,
 In the banqueting-hall of Brano.

One day she took up in her strain
The death of Cormac, the young brave ; 485
She with sadness extolled the hero,
Who fell on the hill for her love.
Her ruddy cheek was bathed with tears,
And thy cheek, great leader of chiefs ;
Her spirit was swimming in mist, 490
Though she loved not the youth of locks ;
Among thousands bright was the maid,
The daughter of banqueting Brano."

" Speak not, Caruill, to me of Lamh-geal,
Recall not the fair one to me. 495
My soul shall sink sad for my love,
My eye shall be, hero, in tears ;
My beloved is pale in the dust,
The charming maid who got my heart.
Sit thou on this eminence, bard, 500
Let me hear recited thy lay—
Thy lay like the zephyr of spring
On the hill passing o'er the hunter,
When he wakes from dreams in the pass,
And hears the rejoicing of ghosts, 505
Their cold strains on the mountain-side."

FIONN GAL.

DUAN VI.

THE clouds of the night fell on ocean,
Darkness gathered on Cromla's hill ;
The stars of the north brightly rose,
Shining upon the waves of Erin ;
They displayed their calm distant fire, 5
Through mist that moved slow o'er the skies.
The wind was sounding in the wood,
Dark and still was the field of death.

On the sounding moorland of Lena
Caruill's voice arose on my ear ; 10
His song was on friends of our youth,
In great days that declined of old,
When we met on Lego of chiefs,
And the bounteous shell went round.
Cromla echoed the sound of song ; 15
The ghosts of the dead swam on wind ;
In their joy they bent slowly down,
To the song of praise bent the heroes.

May thy soul be in comfort, Caruill,
 In the whirling blasts of the mount. 20
 Why comest thou not to my hall,
 And I passing the night alone ?
 My true friend will certainly come ;
 Let me hear his hand on the harp
 Which is stretched on the sounding wall ; 25
 The sound will come slow to my ear.
 Why not speak to me in my grief ?
 What time shall I see my great friends ?
 Thou wilt pass me by in the blast,
 That rustles in my hoary hair ; 30
 Man who lauded heroes, farewell !

On the many-browed side of Mora
 The chiefs of conquests met at feast ;
 There a thousand oaks greatly blazed,
 And the strength of shells circled round. 35
 There was joy in the souls of heroes ;
 But Lochlin's king of spoils was sad ;
 His red eye was on Lena's heath,
 And his burning anger was great ;
 He remembered he fell in battle. 40

The king leaned on his father's shield,
 With his grey hair spread on the wind
 Beneath the streaming light of night ;
 He Suaran beheld under grief,
 And gently accosted his bards : 45

“ Raise, Ullin, the music of peace,
 Calm the rage of war in my soul ;
 Let the noise subside from my ear,
 The loud crashing of heroes' steel ;

Raise a hundred harps on the hill, 50
 To gladden the chieftain of waves ;
 He'll not leave without joy the mount ;
 No man ever left me in grief.
 Great Oscar, the gleam of my sword
 'Gainst the foe is in time of battle ; 55
 It reposes in peace by my side,
 When the brave have yielded in strife."
 "Treunmor was," said the lips of song,
 "Of the race in the time of old ;
 He crossed o'er the sea to the north, 60
 Resembling a billow in storm,
 A high cliff in the land of oars,
 Whose rocks and dark forests resound.
 He rose from the grey mist of ocean,
 And tied up his sails on the shore. 65
 Treunmor chased the dun mountain-boar,
 That roared upon Gorm-meal of trees ;
 Behind he left many a hero ;
 The prey yielded to Treunmor's spear
 As it rolled in the throes of death. 70
 Three heroes who witnessed the deed,
 Related of the stranger chief,
 Related how he stood apart
 Like a towering flame on the mount,
 In the dazzling light of great arms. 75
 Lochlin's king gave a sumptuous feast,
 And invited the gallant youth ;
 For three days in Gorm-meal of chiefs,
 That sounded with the shell and harp,
 For combat the chief got his choice. 80

There was none in Lochlin of ships
 But yielded to the strong man Treunmor.
 The shell and rejoicing went round
 Mid the flashes and sound of song
 That extolled hilly Morbheinn's king, 85
 Who came over across the sea,
 The brave leader of noble heroes.

“ When the fourth morning greyed around,
 The chief put his oars in the waves.
 He stepped soft on the shore of shells, 90
 Awaiting a wind from the north.
 At a distance he heard a noise,
 From amidst a glen, in the wood.

“ A young man came o'er from the hill,
 In armour concealed to his head ; 95
 Fair his locks and ruddy his cheek,
 His form like the snow of cold hills ;
 Gentle his blue eye of long lashes,
 While he spoke to the king of swords :

“ “ Stay, Treunmor, and do not depart, 100
 Thou steel that art dread among men ;
 Lonbal's son of arms to thee yields not ;
 His great sword has smitten the brave,
 E'en the bold wisely shun his arrow.”

“ “ Tender youth of the flaxen hair,” 105
 Said the king of swords, ‘ I'll not smite
 A man's son unheard of in song ;
 Thy white hand is feeble and soft ;
 Withdraw, beaming radiance of youth,
 Go quickly to the cliffs of roes.’ 110

“ “ If I go,’ was the youth's reply,

‘It shall be with Treunmor’s great sword ;
 My soul shall have joy in my fame,
 And I shall win the love of maidens,
 When they come with their ogling eyes 115
 Round the man who slew the great king ;
 Their bosoms shall sigh for my love,
 When they see thy sword and thy spear.
 Among thousands I shall have joy,
 High-honoured in midst of the feast.’ 120

“‘Thou shalt never carry my sword,’
 Replied Treunmor, with flushing cheek ;
 ‘Pale on shore thy mother shall see thee,
 And see moving slow o’er the waves
 The sails of him who slew her son.’ 125

“‘Myself shall not raise the great spear,’
 Said the young man of mildest look ;
 ‘My arm is not strong ; but unmatched
 Is the arrow that flies from my thumb
 With smooth feather from the hard bowstring ;
 At long distance heroes fall pale. 131
 Lay thou quickly aside thy mail,
 Nought but steel preserves thee from death.
 I shall lay my mail on the field ;
 Draw the bowstring, thou king of Morbheinn.’

“He saw her breast beneath her locks, 136
 The sister of the king it was.
 Her eye watched the chief in the hall,
 And he gained her unbounded love.
 The hand of the king dropped the spear, 140
 While abashed he looked on the ground.
 She resembled a beam from the east,

That meets a recluse from his cave,
When he bends his eye on the ocean,
As it greatly glitters with light. 145

“‘King of Morbheinn of sounding knolls,’
Said the maid of arms white as snow,
‘Take me into thy sailing ship,
From Coirle’s unaccepted love ;
For he is like thunder in battle 150
To Ineabhaca of strong heroes ;
He loves me, in his haughty pride
Raising a thousand spears in battle.’

“‘Rest in peace,’ said Treunmor the chief,
‘Rest in peace, beneath my shield, white-hand ;
I never fled, nor shall I flee, 156
Should I see on the hill a host
Of foemen with a thousand spears.’

“Three days did the hero remain,
With war-horn of the loudest sound 160
Inviting brave Coirle to battle,
From mountain, from moss, and from rock ;
But brave Coirle came not to battle.
Armed Lochlin from his tower came down,
The maid of white-hand was given Treunmor ;
The feast rose anew on the shore.” 166

“King of Lochlin,” said noble Fionngal,
“Thy blood courses fast in my side.
Our sires were in strife by the waves,
In strife that shall ever be named. 170
But often in the feasting hall
Was the friendly beaker sent round.
Raise thy face from the strife of spears,

Let the harp bring joy to thy ear.

Like great storms on the face of ocean 175

Hast thou poured thy resistless strength ;

Thy voice like a thousand men's voices,

Rising on the hill of the dead.

Raise to-morrow, upraise thy sails,

True brother of my love that was ; 180

Like the rays of the sun anew

Comes her praise ev'n now to my soul.

For white-hand I witnessed thy tears,

When my sword against Starno rose ;

I kept thee from harm at the time, 185

And sighed for the white-bosomed maid.

But now if thy choice be the combat,

Such combat as Lochlin gave Treunmor,

Thou'l return to thy land with glory,

As the sun sets behind the mount." 190

" King of sires from the lofty hills,"

Said the chief of high-sounding Lochlin,

" Suaran will not strive with thy sword,

Head of thousands who victory won ;

I saw thee in my distant land, 195

When not many my days had been ;

I said to my soul at the time,

When as strong shall I raise the sword

As Fionngal of spirited blows ?

We did, warrior, fight the battle, 200

On the dark rocky side of Mealmor,

When the waves brought over my spear

To the lofty hall of free shells,

Where the brave partook of the feast.

Let the bards send those who prevailed, 205
 To times that shall tardily move.
 Of the heroes who strove on Mealmor,
 High praise without stint shall be heard.
 Many ships from the land of great woods,
 Have lost their brave youths upon Lena. 210
 Accept of them, king of great mountains,
 Be a friend to the foe of Erin.
 When thy children shall come to Gorm-meal,
 A rich feast and cheer shall be theirs ;
 In the glen they shall have their choice 215
 In the strife of heroes with swords."
 "I will not accept," said the king,
 "Of thy ships or the land of rocks ;
 The waste desert suffices me,
 With its glens, its woods, and its deer. 220
 So raise thou thy sails o'er the waves,
 Gentle friend of my love that was ;
 When light dawns on the mountain-peaks,
 Then raise thy white sails on the ocean,
 On thy way back to sounding Gorm-meal." 225
 "Peace be to thy soul, king of shells,"
 Said Suaran of the dark-brown shields ;
 "In peace thou'rt the zephyr of spring,
 In war thou'rt a rock in the storm ;
 Then grasp thou in friendship my hand, 230
 King of war-arms from Selma cold,
 And let thy unmatchable bards
 Give to grief the dead on the field ;
 Let Erin in dust lay my people ;
 Raise stones on the hill to their fame. 235

Northern friends of the dead shall see
 The field where the battle was fought.
 The hunter coming from the mount
 Shall say, as he leans on a grave,
 'Here Fionngal and Suaran, the heroes,
 Waged battle with hundreds of people.' 240
 This the silly hunter shall say ;
 But our fame shall endure for aye."

"To-day is our fame at its height,"
 Said Fionngal, "thou king of the waves ; 245
 Like a vision we shall depart,
 Nor be named on the fields of heroes ;
 The hunter shall not know our graves,
 We shall not have a name in song.
 We shall not have need to be named, 250
 And we pale unnerved in the tomb.
 Ossian, Caruill, and gentle Ullin,
 Who knew heroes fallen and gone,
 Raise a song of the noted days,
 The time of the brave that are dead. 255
 Pass ye over the night with sound,
 And let morn come quickly with joy."

To both kings our voices we raised,
 In the sound strove a hundred harps.
 Suaran's countenance brightened up, 260
 Like the full-orbed moon in the sky,
 When the clouds have left her on high,
 Broad and calm in the midst of night.

"Cuchullin," began aged Caruill,
 "Cuchullin is in Tura's cave, 265
 His hand on the sword of his strength,

His thoughts on the host he has lost ;
 The king of spears is sad on the mount ;
 Till now he was mighty in battle.

He puts his sword in peace at thy side, 270
 Since thou, like the rush of a storm,
 Hast scattered his foemen in flight.

Take thou, Fionngal, the hero's sword ;
 For his fame is empty as mist
 When carried away by the wind, 275
 It leaves all the plain without shade."

"I shall not," was the king's reply,
 "I shall not in peace take his sword ;
 The hero is mighty in battle,
 And his fame is strong as his arm. 280

To many who have failed in war,
 New strife has arisen with fame.

Suaran, king of the forest land,
 Put thou thy vexation aside ;

Those who yield are held in esteem, 285
 If they have been brave against foes,
 Like the sun under clouds in heaven
 When in summer he hides himself,

To look on the ridges of grass.

Grumal, who was chief in Cona, 290
 Sought battle on many a shore ;
 There was joy to his soul in storms,

To his ears in the sound of arms :
 He poured his heroes on Craca's height.

Craca's king from woods met his sword, 295
 In Brumo's circle of great knolls
 He communed with the spectre-stone.

Dreadful was the strife of the heroes
For the sweet maid of sides like snow.

Red Grumal by the stream of Cona 300

Had heard of the beautiful maid ;

White-hand of the waves would be his,
Or himself would be cold in battle.

Three days did the heroes contend ;

On the fourth day Grumal was bound, 305

And put, without friends by his side,
In Brumo's circle 'neath the hill.

The spirits of the dead were there,
Fierce-shrieking round the spectre-stone.

But the hero afterwards shone 310

Anew like the fire of the sky ;

Foemen fell by his mighty arm,

Grumal found himself and his fame."

" Raise, ye bards, from the times gone by,"
With great force said the king of Morbheinn,
" Raise the fame of chiefs that are dead ; 316
From depression arouse great Suaran."

With the surly wind in their locks,

The warriors lay in the heath ;

A hundred sweet voices arose, 320

A hundred strong harps rose together ;

The song was of times that were gone,

And great chiefs that were brave in battle.

When by me shall be heard the bard ?

When shall joy be floating around ? 325

All unstrung is the harp in Morbheinn,

Voice or music is not in Cona ;

The chief and bard alike have fallen,

There is praise in the place no more.

Morn trembled with rays from the east, 330
On the sea and the slope of Cromla.
Suaran's horn was heard upon Lena
Collecting his people in Erin.
Silent and sad were the people
When they rose under sails on ocean ; 335
A sharp breeze was behind the ships ;
The white sails were like mist on Morbheinn.

“Call,” said Fionngal, “call to the chase
The slim dogs that wear not the marsh,
Call to Bran of the whitest breast, 340
To Neart and to Ciar and to Luath.
Fillan, Roinne—he’s in the grave,
My son is in the sleep of death !
Fillan, Feargus, blow ye the horn ;
Let gladness rise on knoll and cairn, 345
Let deer start on Cromla above,
And by the lake of roes, their haunt.”

The sharp sound went far through the wood ;
A herd slowly rose upon Cromla.
A thousand dogs sped o'er the heath ; 350
A deer on its side fell to each ;
While to Bran alone there fell three,
And he turned the three towards Fionn,
Great gladness to raise in the king.
One fell beside the grave of Roinne ; 355
The leader of men was in grief :
He witnessed how still was the tomb
Of him that was swift in the chase.
“Thou wilt rise not again, my son,

In feast or host on Cromla's slope ;
 With the grass withering around it,
 Quickly shall thy tomb be forgotten.
 The race of the weak shall pass on,
 Nor see nor inquire for thy grave.

“ Ossian, Fillan, sons of my strength, 360
 Gall of hosts with the bluest steel,
 Ascend on the face of the hill ;
 Find me the chief in Tura's cave,
 Find me Erin's vanquishing chief.
 Is it Tura's wall I see high, 370
 So lonely and grey on the hill ?
 The chief of free shells is in grief ;
 Without sound is the banquet-hall ;
 Let me find out worthy Cuchullin,
 And quickly bring joy to the hero. 375
 Fillan, is that o'er there Cuchullin,
 Or a smoke on the rock of heath ?
 In my eye is the wind of Cromla,
 I see not distinctly the hero.”

“ That, king,” was the young man's reply, 380
 “ Is the brave man, the son of Seuma ;
 He is silent and dark through grief,
 With his hand on his rising sword.”

“ All hail to the leader of battles,
 To the man who breaks the great shields ! ” 385
 “ All hail to thyself ! ” said the chief,
 “ With brave heroes round and behind thee ;
 Pleasant, king, to me is thy presence,
 Like the sun on the heath of Cromla,
 When the hunter shall be in grief, 390

Till he sees him large in the clouds.
 Thou mov'st in the light of thy fame,
 With thy sons like stars by thy side,
 Brightly clearing the brow of night.
 Fionngal, it was not in such plight 395
 Thou sawest me, chief, in thy land,
 When the world's rulers left the mount,
 And joy came to each country-side."

"Many are thy words," said base Conan,
 "Many thy vain words, son of Seuma; 400
 In talk none is heard but thyself.
 But where are thy actions and blows?
 Wherefore came we over the ocean,
 To succour with sword those in flight?
 Thou fleddest in gloom to thy cave, 405
 Thus leaving to Conan the battle.
 Give me, then, thy bright shining arms,
 Give them without guile, son of Erin."

"No hero ever asked my sword;
 If he did, he'd not have my arms. 410
 Conan, who art weak with the shield,
 I left not in sorrow the hill,
 Till Erin failed by her own streams."

"Conan of contemptible arm,"
 Said Morbheinn's king, the noble chief, 415
 "Be not thou so forward in words,
 Until higher are seen thy deeds.
 In battle Cuchullin is famed,
 Terrible wherever he goes;
 Often has the hero been heard of, 420
 High leader of the Pail in Erin.

Then, warrior, raise thy white sails
 To the isle of swords under mist.
 See thou Bragh-geal, o'er yonder, leaning
 From the edge of a rock in tears ; 425
 The wind sounds in her heavy locks,
 Lifting them from her smooth white breast ;
 She harks to night-sounds from the hill,
 And sweet strains from the men of oars ;
 In hopes that she may hear thy song 430
 And thy harp on the face of ocean."

“ And long shall she hearken in vain ;
 I shall ne'er return from the strife.
 Sweetest Bragh-geal, why should I see thee
 Heaving heavy sighs for thy hero ? 435
 Thou hast, king victorious, seen me
 In many straits from sword and spear.”

“ Thou'l^t again be victorious seen,”
 Said Fionngal of bounteous shell ;
 “ Thy renown in pursuit shall rise, 440
 Like an oak on Cromla of hills.
 Many a sharp conflict and war,
 Brave warrior, for thee await,
 Many wounds from thy hand on the hill.

“ Put, Oscar, the deer on the heath ; 445
 Raise the feast and the flowing shell ;
 Let the soul of the chief be glad,
 And our friends have joy on the field.”

We sat enjoying feast and song.
 The soul of Cuchullin rose high ; 450
 To the chief of arms came his strength ;
 Gladness in his countenance beamed.

Ullin to the chief gave the song ;
Caruill raised his voice on the field ;
On the knoll I aided the bards, 455
On the battles of chiefs with spears,
Battles in which I drew the sword ;
But the sword I shall draw no more—
My fame left with deeds that are gone.
Let me sit in grief by the graves, 460
The graves of great friends that are not.

The night glided over with song ;
Morning came with joy o'er the waves.
Fionngal on the summit uprose,
And brandished the spear in his hand ; 465
He stretched his great steps over Lena,
We followed the chief in our arms.

“Spread the white sails,” said the king,
“Catch the wind from the wood of Lena.”
We rose on the billows with song ; 470
The joy of the heroes was great
On the white foam of the hoar deep.

T I G H M O R A.

D U A N I.

In light are the blue waves of Erin,
High hills are in the glare of day ;
Trees dark-headed sway in the wind ;
Grey waterfalls pour down from rocks ;
Two hillocks are green under oak. 5

In its narrow and winding path,
Water sweetly wanders through glens ;
On the bank of the burn is Cairbre,
His spear at command by his side,
His red eye affrighted and sad. 10

Cormac rose in the soul of the king,
With deep ghastly wounds in his side.
Half perceived was the youth in shade,
The blood streaming red from his breast.

Cairbre three times threw his spear, 15
Three times laid his beard 'neath his hand ;
Oft suddenly paused in his course,
Shaking high his murderous arm.

The chief was like a desert cloud,
In stormy winds changing its form,
While the glens under hills were sad,
Alternately fearing the blast.

20

But the king resumed his great soul,
Grasped the spear of chiefs in his hand,
Turned his eye to the back of Lena.

25

The watchers of danger from ocean,
With terrified footsteps they came,
Often turning to look behind.

Cairbre, knowing the king of deeds,
Dark-summoned his chiefs to his side.
Quick they came with echoing steps,
Their naked blue swords in their hands.

30

There was Morla in darksome shade ;
There Dalla with locks in the wind ;
Red Cormar leaned over his spear,

35

Looking fierce from his sidelong scowl ;
Savage were thy lowered eyes, Malthos,
Beneath the great folds of their lashes ;
Foldath stood like a rock in a stream

That conceals its black form in foam,

40

His long spear like a mountain pine
That meets the strong wind of the sky,
His shield bearing traces of combat,
His red eye a stranger to fear.

These and other chiefs without number
Gathered close round the king of Erin,
When the watchman of ocean, Moranail,
Arrived on the hill of Moi-Lena,
His eyes bursting squint in his head,

45

His lips shaking, pale and awry. 50

“Stand the leaders of Erin back,
Like a grove in the quiet night,
Like a forest silent in mist,
When Fionngal on the shore is shining,
Fionngal of the terrible strokes, 55
King of heroes from Morbheinn’s streams ?”

“Saw’st thou the redoubtable chief ?”
Said Cairbre with labouring breast.

“Are his warriors many on shore ?
Will he raise for battle the spear, 60
Or cometh the mighty in peace ?”

“He comes not in peace, king of Erin ;
Before him upborne is the spear,
Like the slow fire of death ascending,
Blood of thousands marking its steel. 65
He the first man that struck the land,
Vigorous ’neath ringlets of grey.
Large, sinewy the limbs of the king,
With ease striding over the heath,
His sword hanging slant at his side— 70
That sword that two strokes never needs ;
His awful broad shield in his hand,
Like the round bloody orb of the moon,
Rising boldly amid the storm.

There Ossian, the sweet king of songs ; 75
Morni’s son, the leader of chiefs ;
Conal sprang on his spear from the waves ;
Diarmid loosened his locks of brown ;
Fillan bended his bow with pride,
Young hunter from the great hill-streams. 80

But who is that leading the brave,
 Like a strong-rushing mountain-stream ?
 Who is it but Ossian's great son,
 Gleaming like a fire 'mid his locks,
 In folds o'er his shoulders that fall,
 His dark brow half hidden in steel,
 His sword in a thong at his side,
 His spear flashing light at each step.
 I fled from the hero's fierce eye,
 Greatly renowned king of Tighmora." 90

" Flee thou, wretched man without use,"
 Said Foldath, dark-frowning in wrath—
 " Flee thou to thy own hoary streams,
 Son of little, ignoble soul.

Brown Oscar have I not beheld ? 95
 I have seen the warrior in battle ;
 In danger the hero is brave ;
 But other men can raise the spear ;
 Many sons hath Erin as great.

King of greatly wooded Tighmora,
 Let me but encounter the foe ;
 I'll check this great stream in its course.
 For my spear has been bathed in blood,
 While my shield is like Tura's wall."

" Shall Foldath alone meet the foe ?" 105
 Said Malthos of the swarthy brow.
 " Are they not as many on shore
 As the gathering streams of the hills ?
 Are they not the men who prevailed
 Over Suaran of the hard strokes,
 When the race of Erin took flight ? 110

Their first hero shall Foldath meet
 With heart of wax and silly pride ?
 Take the strength of the men in hundreds,
 And let Malthos come with the brave. 115
 With cleaving my sword has been red,
 But who froward e'er heard my voice ?”

“ Men of Erin of greenest fields,”
 Said the chief of sweet-watered Claonrath,
 “ Let not Fionngal hear your vain words ; 120
 Let our foes not have joy to-day,
 Strengthening their arms in the land.
 Ye are strong, ye children of battles,
 Like a tempest from roaring ocean,
 Like a storm that meets a high cliff, 125
 Laying low the wood on the hill.
 But let us move in our own strength,
 Slowly as a great massing cloud.
 Fear shall seize the brave son of blows,
 His great spear will fall from the chief. 130
 ‘ We shall see death’s dark cloud,’ they’ll say,
 As deepens the gloom on their face ;
 Mild Fionngal, the aged, shall mourn,
 When, o’ercome, his fame leaves the shore.
 The chief’s steps will not be on Morbheinn ;
 Years of wailing will be in Selma.” 136

In silence red Cairbre stood listening,
 Like a black dripping cloud of the waves,
 That stands dark on Cromla above,
 Till the lightning shivers its side ; 140
 Glens will blaze in the flash of heaven ;
 Silly ghosts will be filled with joy.

It was thus stood the king in silence ;
Soon his voice was heard with effect.

“ Let the feast be spread on Moi-Lena ; 145
Let my hundred bards hither come.

Rise, Olla of the dark-red locks ;
Take up the harp of Erin’s king ;
Go to mighty Oscar of swords,

Ask him o’er to the feast ; to-day 150
Feast and song will be in the glen ;
To-morrow we shall break the spear.

Tell him I have raised up the tomb
Of Cathuil with the praise of bards ;
I gave his poor friend to the wind. 155

Tell him I have heard of his fame,
And success by the sounding Carun.
But I see not here my brave brother,
At my side not Cathmor of hundreds ;
Our followers are weak in arms. 160

Cathmor frowns on strife at the feast ;
Great his soul as rays from the sun.
Cairbre and Oscar shall break spears
On Lena’s plain, chiefs of Tighmora.

About Cathuil loud was his talk ; 165
My soul in me kindled with wrath ;
He shall fall of wounds on Moi-Lena,
Where my fame shall uprise through blood.”

The joy of heroes brightened round ;
They spread round the hill of Moi-Lena, 170
Where the feast of shells was preparing,
Amid the rising strains of bards.
The chiefs of Selma heard the joy,

And supposed great Cathmor was come,
 Noble Cathmor, the friend of strangers. 175
 Though the brother of red-haired Cairbre,
 No resemblance of soul was theirs ;
 Heaven's light was in the chief's breast ;
 His high tower was on Atha's banks,
 With seven paths to the hall of storms ; 180
 On every path there stood a bard,
 Bidding strangers to the free board ;
 Cathmor sat on the wooded hill,
 And heard not a third of his praise.

Red-haired Olla came with his lay. 185
 Oscar straightway went to the feast ;
 Three hundred marched close by his side ;
 Over Lena of full blue streams
 His grey dogs bounded through the heath,
 Their loud baying reaching afar. 190
 Fionngal saw the hero depart ;
 The soul of the chief sank in grief,
 Fearing Cairbre of gloomy thoughts,
 'Midst the quaffing of festive shells.
 When my son raised the spear of Cormac, 195
 On the hill rose a hundred bards.
 Cairbre kept secret at the time
 The death that swam dark in his breast.
 Shells were sounding, the feast was spread ;
 Joy brightened in the people's face, 200
 But it shone like the feeble sun
 When he slants his rays in the glens
 And hides his red disc in the storm.
 Cairbre rose beyond in his arms,

Gathering the dead's gloom on his brow. 205
 The harps of hundreds ceased their sound ;
 The clang of shields was heard around.

Far off on the breast of the hill,
 Red Olla raised the voice of woe.

Oscar, knowing the sign of death, 210
 Went and instantly seized his spear.

“Oscar,” began the red-haired Cairbre,
 “Son of Morbheinn of dusky hills,
 Glittering in thy rising hand

I see Erin’s conquering spear— 215
 The long spear of towering Tighmora,
 The just pride of a hundred kings,
 Death on fields to heroes of old.

Yield it without strife, son of Ossian,
 Yield it to Cairbre of the cars.” 220

“Shall I yield,” the hero replied,
 “That given me by Erin’s brave king,
 That given me by comely-haired Cormac,
 When I scattered with strokes the northmen ?

I came to the banqueting-hall 225
 When they fled from vanquishing Fionngal ;
 Joy arose in the face of youth ;

He put Tighmora’s spear in my hand ;
 He bestowed it not on a weakling,
 Nor a vaunting soul without deeds. 230

Thy dark frown is no storm to me,
 No fire of death to me thine eye ;
 I fear not thy shield, nor the song
 From Olla, who is poor in blows.

Go, Cairbre, and frighten the slave ; 235

Oscar always is like a rock."

"Wilt thou not at once yield the spear?"
Said Cairbre, in his rising wrath.

"Are thy words thus stormy and high
About Fionngal on Erin's shore,
About Fionngal of hoary locks,
From the forests of Morbheinn's hills ?
He always warred with feeble men ;
But let him come over to Cairbre ;
He'll fail in the glen like a shadow,
Or mist that is dull on the waste,
Descending and rolling from Atha."

"Were the chief who warred with the weak
But approaching near unto Cairbre,
Then would Cairbre from Atha of glens
Make o'er, without arming, green Erin.
But speak not of the mighty, chief ;
Against me turn thy sword and shield—
Whose strength no comparison bears ;
Fionngal of the shield is renowned,
The high leader of noble chiefs."

Both their friends together beheld
The stern lowering frown on their brows ;
Heard the sound of their hastening steps ;
Their eyes were like a raging fire ;
Half unsheathed were a thousand swords.
Knowing Olla suppressed the strain,
Red Olla of inciting lays.
His soul thrilled in Oscar with joy,
With joy that was wont to the chief
When the war-horn of the king rose.

Darkly as the dun waves of ocean
 Ere rises the wind on the waves,
 Propelling their crests to the shore,
 Cairbre's host came quick to his side.

270

Why, daughter of Toscar, thy tears ?
 The great mighty chief has not fallen ;
 Many deaths shall encircle the hill
 Ere the brave one droop on his side.

275

Behold how they fall by the chief,
 Like the woods on the barren hills
 When in wrath comes the sprite of the storm
 Amain under night from the desert,
 His hand on the tops of the pines !

In death fell Mathronnan and Morla ;

280

Conachar fell to earth in blood ;
 Cairbre fled from the hero's sword,
 Crouching down in vindictive gloom
 Behind the stone of forms and curves.¹

In secret he lifted his spear,

285

And struck Oscar's side : on his shield
 The warrior fell to the ground,
 Sustaining himself on his knee,
 With his own long spear in his hand.

See Cairbre laid prostrate in dust !

290

The point of the steel cleft his head,
 Severing his red locks behind :
 Like a broken rock fell the chief,
 That suddenly slips from the height
 When the green isle of Erin shakes

295

¹ Seemingly a sculptured stone.

From Ben to Ben and sea to sea.¹

On the boss of his shield reclining,
The spear of dark death in his hand,
Never more shall brown Oscar rise ;
Far off on the ascent stood Erin,
Their shout like the roaring of streams ;
Echoing Lena answered the sound.

Fionngal, who apart heard the cry,
Seized the conquering spear of Selma ;
Stretched his steps on the face of the hill, 305
His voice waking accents of woe :
"I hear the loud tumult of battle ;
Oscar is alone in the strife.

Let the race of the brave from Morbheinn
With alacrity aid his sword." 310

My steps were with speed on the heath ;
Fillan bounded over Moi-Lena ;
Not least, Fionngal came in his strength.
Dreadful was the brilliance rising
From shields on the warrior host. 315
Erin's race beheld from afar
The gleam on the verge of the slope ;
They knew that not lightly arose
To the king his sorrowful wrath,
Foreshadowing death in their thoughts. 320
We came ; we contended in battle ;
Erin's warriors repelled our shock.
But when Fionngal came in his sound,
Who so bold as encounter his steel ?

¹ Ireland must have been subject to earthquakes then.

They fled from the heights of Moi-Lena, 325
 With carnage pursued in their flight.
 Young Oscar we found on his shield,
 His blood flowing red by his side;
 There was silence on every face,
 Each retiring apart to weep. 330
 With the wind in his hoary beard,
 The king was concealing his tears;
 He bent down his head o'er the brave;
 Sobs broke with his words from the chief :
 "Oscar of the sword, hast thou fallen 335
 In the midst of thy glorious course ?
 The heart of the agèd is pained,
 Seeing wars that should fall to the brave—
 The wars that hereafter shall come,
 Cut off without meed of renown. 340
 When shall gladness arise on Selma ?
 When shall sorrow depart from Morbheinn ?
 My children successively fall ;
 Fionngal is the last of his line.
 Subsiding from song is my praise ; 345
 My age shall be desolate, friendless,
 Like a cloud of mist in my hall.
 I shall hear of no son's return,
 'Mid the triumph and pomp of arms.
 Shed tears, ye warriors of Morbheinn ! 350
 Never more shall young Oscar rise."
 And fast fell their tears, king of arms,
 None niggard of soul for the chief ;
 He went to the wars of the glens ;
 Foemen vanished before his shield ; 355

Amid joy he returned in peace.
 No father lamented his sons,
 Cut off in the morning of youth ;
 To dust they descended unwept,
 When the people's leader was low.

360

Bran mournfully howled by his side,
 Shaggy Luath of the moors was sad ;
 They went frequently forth together
 To pursue the deer of the desert.

When he witnessed his friends around, 365
 Fast heaved with emotion his breast.

The sobs of the age-stricken chiefs,
 The howling of dogs, and the dirge
 Breaking sad from the lips of bards—
 These melted my soul under grief, 370
 My soul that ne'er melted before,
 'Mid the conflict with shields in battle,
 Resembling the steel of my sword.

“ Carry me to my knoll, warrior ;
 Raise stones on the hill to my fame ; 375
 Lay with me the horn of a deer,

Place my thin keen sword by my side.
 Floods hereafter shall raise the earth ;
 The hunter will espy the steel :
 ‘Tis great Oscar's sword amid rust,

High pride of the years that have flown.”

“ Falls the son who gave me my fame ?
 Shall I see thee, Oscar, no more ?

When great chiefs of their children hear,
 Shall I hear nought of thee, my son ? 385

Moss shall clothe thy memorial stones ;

The wind 'mid their fringes shall wail ;
 Battles shall without thee be fought ;
 Thou'l not chase the dun hinds on hills.
 When the warrior, returned from strife, 390
 Thus speaks of the land of the Galls :
 'I beheld a grave by a stream
 That fell roaring from dusky cairns,
 The darksome abode of a chief
 By Oscar of the cars that fell, 395
 Chief of heroes whose doom is death,'—
 I perchance may o'erhear his voice ;
 'Twill gladden my sorrowful breast.'

The night would have fallen with grief ;
 Nor have risen the sun with joy, 400
 In the shade dejected by sorrow ;
 The chiefs would have stood like the cliffs
 Of Moi-Lena shrouded in mist,
 Cold-sweating, nor speaking of war ;
 Till, raising on high his great voice, 405
 Fionngal mildly dispersed their grief.
 The heroes awoke by his side
 As from dreams—their sorrow assuaging.

“ How long shall our tears fall in vain
 On Moi-Lena of hills in Erin ? 410
 The mighty no more shall return ;
 Oscar's strength shall never arise.
 The valiant shall fall in their day,
 Nor be seen on the hills their steps.
 Where now are our conquering sires, 415
 Men of war from the ages gone ?
 They have sunk like stars behind hills,

Who illumined a misty land.
 We hear but the sound of their fame ;
 But famed in their season were they, 420
 In the years of the brave, departed :
 Shadowy and awful the past.
 Even so shall we pass from the scene
 With the days, to the narrow house.
 Let us then in our time be renowned, 425
 And leave to the future our name,
 Like the light of the sun without cloud
 When in darkness he hides his head :
 The wayfarer groping shall mourn,
 Remembering his beams in the west. 430
 Go, Ullin, my own agèd bard,
 Take thou a small ship of the king's ;
 Bear Oscar to Selma of heath.
 Let the fair in their arbours weep,
 The full-breasted maidens of Morbheinn. 435
 We shall fight the battles of Erin
 For the race of chiefs fallen with Cormac.
 "The days of my years are in gloom ;
 I feebleness feel in my arm ;
 My forefathers bend from their clouds 440
 To the faint course of their hoar son.
 This same place shall not be forsaken,
 Till a halo rise of renown.
 My life shall be as heaven's red stream
 To the bards of peaceable lips." 445
 Ullin raised white sails for the north ;
 A wind from the south struck the waves ;
 The ship sped o'er ocean to Selma.

I stood under sorrow apart,
 With no word from me to the ear, 450
 On Moi-Lena's hill was a feast.
 O'er a hundred laid under earth
 Fierce Cairbre of the lofty towers ;
 No song rose from lips in his praise ;
 His soul was in darkness and gore ; 455
 For the bard remembered the king :
 Why should Cairbre be named in song ?

The mantle of night fell around ;
 Light on high from a hundred trees
 Was seen, brightening the sides of clouds. 460
 'Neath an oak on the height sat Fionngal ;
 By his side stood Althan of songs
 With the dark mournful tale of Cormac--
 Althan, son of Conachar of heroes,
 A friend of the chief of great cars— 465
 Whose abode was with Cormac himself,
 In Tighmora of mighty winds,
 When a cloud concealed Seuma's son,
 Beside Lego of dark-brown streams.
 Mournful was the tale of grey Althan ; 470
 The king's eyes overflowed with tears,
 As with eloquence spoke the bard :

“ The yellow sun glimmered on Dora,
 While grey evening advanced beyond ;
 The woods quivered around Tighmora, 475
 In the fitful wind of the hill ;
 In the west gathered cold dark clouds,
 While red stars rose under their wings.
 I stood alone on the hill-slope,

'Gainst the grey sky seeing a ghost ; 480
 His great steps were from hill to hill,
 His broad shield was dim on his side :
 'Twas the conquering son of Seuma.
 Well I knew the frown of the hero,
 Who departed on his own blast ; 485
 Darkness without ray was around.
 My soul sank with grief overwhelmed ;
 I hastened to the hall of towers,
 The hall of bounteous sounding shells,
 Where a thousand torches blazed high ; 490
 Full a hundred bards were in tune.
 Cormac stood in their midst, as lovely
 As a young star risen in the sky
 When it looks in its tranquil joy
 From behind dark hills in the east, 495
 Its fresh radiance brightening the dew—
 Rising without speck from the sea :
 Its course will be peaceful on high,
 Without cloud to obscure its rays.
 Artho's sword was in the king's hand ; 500
 He drew it with the fire of youth ;
 Three times did he draw it with might,
 Three times in the sheath it remained.
 His brown locks round his shoulders fell,
 Brightness shone in his youthful face. 505
 I mourned that a radiance so pure,
 So quickly in darkness should set.
 "With a pleasant smile, said the youth,
 'Has Althan, the bard, seen the hero ?
 The sword of Erin's king is heavy ; 510

His arm was right powerful to smite.
 Alas ! that I'm not like my father
 When his wrath was aroused in battle.
 Then I'd meet in the conflict of heroes
 The great foe of Cuchullin himself,
 Ceanntala of the dreadful cars.

515

It may be, when a year rolls by,
 That then, Althan of song, this arm
 Will be strong in the wars of chiefs.
 Hast thou heard of Seuma's brave son,
 The chief ruler in high Tighmora ?
 Would that he were here with his fame,
 As he promised me at the time !
 For the bards await him with song,
 A feast is spread in the hall of harps.'

520

525

“ While listening in silence to Cormac,
 The tears down my cheek softly ran ;
 I hid them with my hoary hair ;
 But the king saw my deep distress.

‘ Son of Conachar of sweet songs,
 Is Seuma's son of swords laid low ?
 Why in secret escapes the sigh,
 While the tears trickle down thy cheeks ?
 Is Torlath of the cars at hand ?

530

And the sounding of red-haired Cairbre ?
 They are come ; I now see thy grief ;
 The chief of towered Tura is dark.
 Shall I not go to war with heroes ?
 But how wield the great spear in battle ?
 If my arm were but like Cuchullin's,
 Cairbre would leave the hill in fear ;

535

540

The fame of my great sires would wake,
Their exploits would again return.'

" He grasped the bent bow in his hand,
While the tears streamed over his face 545
From the young hero's brimful eyes.
Dark sorrow spread heavily round ;
The bards of sweet song bended o'er
The faint sound of their hundred harps.
A slow murmur passed through the strings ;
Indistinct and dull was the sound. 551
Far from us there was heard a voice,
As of one in sorrow and gloom.
It was Caruill, from times renowned ;
He came over the great dark hills. 555
He spoke of the death of Cuchullin,
And his deeds in the wars of heroes.
He told how the people dispersed,
Winding round his grave on the hill,
And their arms unused on the rock ; 560
They spoke not about shields or battles ;
For he fell who put fire in blows.

" 'Who are these,' said the gentle Caruill,
'That are swift as roes on the hills ?
Who these like a wood of young trees 565
On the floor of a glen in showers ?
Who but the sons of high-born Usnoth,
From Etha of the hoary streams ?
The people awoke by their side,
Like strong fire on a mountain-ridge
When suddenly rushes the wind 570
On its empty wings from the desert ;

When the dark brows of rocks are gleaming,
And seamen stand in light on ocean.
Heard sounding was the shield of Cathbad. 575
Heroes saw in the face of Nathos
Cuchullin's own prowess and strength ;
For such were his steps on the heath.
Conflict is by the side of Lego,
And young Nathos of arms prevails ; 580
The noble chief shall quickly come
To thy dwelling, king of Tighmora.'

“ ‘Let me quickly behold the chief,’
Said the blue-eyed king of brown locks ;
‘But sorrow is darkening my breast 585
For Cuchullin of shields and heroes.
Often upon Dora of storms
Did we go in chase of the roes.
Often did we speak of the brave,
Of the wars and deeds of my sires, 590
Until brightened and rose my joy.
Sit thou, Caruill, down to the feast
Of harps, and let me hear a lay ;
For at all times sweet is thy voice.
Raise a song in praise of Cuchullin, 595
And Nathos in danger from Etha.’

“ Day suddenly woke from the waves,
With all its red rays from the east.
Crathan, the son of aged Geal-lamh,
Came to the hall of goodly cheer. 600
‘ I’ve seen a black cloud in the desert,
King of mighty heroes in Erin ;
A cloud I supposed it to be—

But these are men close by the sea ;
 One is tall, and steps in his strength,
 While his red locks stream on the wind ;
 His shield gleams in light from the east,
 A long spear is swung in his hand.'

“ ‘ Invite him to Tighmora’s feast,’
 Said the young king, settling in light ; 605
 ‘ Call him to the hall of great chiefs,
 Son of Geal-lamh of deeds and song.
 The hero from Etha it is,
 Coming over with all his fame.

All hail to the stranger of heroes ! 615
 Art thou unto Cormac a friend ?
 Caruill, he is ruffled and grim,
 And draws from behind him his sword.
 Is this the renowned son of Usnoth,
 Bard that putt’st anew what has been ?’ 620

“ ‘ The son of Usnoth he is not,
 But Cairbre, thy foe, in his wrath.
 Wherefore hast thou come under arms,
 Dark-red chief of the frowning brow ?
 Raise not, chief, thy steel ’gainst the king. 625
 Without strife why travel so fast ?’

He advanced in his sullen gloom,
 Seized the hand of the king in his.
 Cormac saw his death was designed ;
 A flame of wrath swam in his eyes. 630
 ‘ Cruel chief of Atha, depart ;
 Brave Nathos shall come and give battle.’
 Thou’rt bold in the midst of my hall,
 And my arm not strong for the sword.’

Cairbre's sword passed up through his breast ;
 The chief fell in his father's hall, 636
 His beautiful locks spread on earth,
 And the smoke of his blood around.

“ ‘ Has fallen in the hall,’ said Caruill,
 ‘ Artho’s generous faithful son, 640
 Unsustained by Cuchullin’s shield,
 Or spear of his father, great chief ?
 Ye are sad, ye mountains of Erin,
 And he not rising among his people.
 To thy soul may there peace be, Cormac ! 645
 Thou hast gone to darkness in youth.’

“ The language of Caruill came up
 Unto the ear of red-haired Cairbre.
 In darkness he shut up the bards,
 ‘ Gainst them fearing to stretch his sword, 650
 Although dark and cruel his breast.
 Long time we remained under grief,
 Till arrived brave Cathmor, the chief,
 And our voices heard from the cave ;
 When he turned a reproachful look 655
 Upon Cairbre of gloomy thoughts.

“ ‘ Brother of Cathmor,’ said the hero,
 ‘ How long shall my spirit be grieved ?
 Thy heart is unkind as a rock—
 Full of blood and dark are thy thoughts ; 660
 But still thou’rt the brother of Cathmor,
 And Cathmor shall assist in battle.
 Unlike are our spirits, warrior ;
 Thou art feeble of hand in strife.
 The light of my soul is obscured 665

By the forward deeds of my brother.
 Bards to song will not give my fame ;
 They will say thus, "Cathmor was brave,
 But his blows were on Cairbre's side."

They will pass o'er my darksome grave ; 670
 My renown shall never be heard.

Then, Cairbre, release thou the bards ;
 They are the children of past time ;
 Their voices on high shall be heard
 When our race shall have sunk in dust, 675
 The race of wooded Tighmora's kings.'

"Forthwith we came out as he said ;
 We beheld in his strength the hero ;
 He was, king, like thee in thy youth
 When first thou didst raise the great spear. 680
 His face was like the source of light,
 The bright sun, nor cloud on the sky ;
 No gloominess clouded his brow.
 He came with thousands of his people
 To the succour of red-haired Cairbre ; 685
 Now he comes to avenge his death,
 King of Morbheinn of lofty trees."

"Then let Cathmor come," said the king ;
 "My hand shall contend with the hero,
 For his soul with honour is bright ; 690
 His arm is in its noon of strength ;
 His battles surround him with fame.
 The small soul like a patch of mist
 Is, that hangs round a tranquil lake ;
 It fears to ascend the great heights 695
 Lest there come to its vapoury form

A sharp gust from the mountain's ridge ;
 Its abode is amongst the rocks,
 Fearing the spectre of death's dart.
 Our youths are, ye heroes of might, 700
 Like their fathers crowned with renown ;
 In their youth amidst bloody battles
 They with honour fell in the dust.

Fionngal himself is in the gloom
 Of bygone years ; let me not fall 705
 Like an oak o'er a tiny stream ;
 Stretched, withering in the strong wind ;
 Close by it is the hunter's step.
 'How fell this same tree ?' he will say,
 As whistling he hurries away. 710

"Let a strain be chanted aloud,
 A strain of joy, ye bards of Morbheinn ;
 Forgotten be the time gone by ;
 Let each soul think of dreadful conflict.
 The stars are looking down from clouds, 715
 In peace going down to the waves ;
 Soon the sunbeams shall reach the west,
 Showing to the full Cormac's foes.
 Then, Fillan, thou son, take my spear,
 Go to Mora of dusky brows ; 720
 Let thy look be at the hill's path,
 Observing to the full our foes ;
 Watch the movements of noble Cathmor.
 I hear a sound that is far off,
 Like the rocks of hills falling down 725
 In the dun desert's winding glens.
 At the same time, strike thou the shield,

Lest they come across in the night,
And the glory of Morbheinn fail.

I am, hero, left here alone ; 730
Let my fame not fail in dim age."

The clear, sweet voice of bards was heard ;
Fionngal leaned on the shield of Treunmor,
Sleep fell on the warrior's eyes,
Signs of battle rose in his mind. 735

The host around was in deep sleep.
Dark-red Fillan observed the foe;
His steps were on the hill of peaks;
We at times heard his sounding shield.

T I G H M O R A.

D U A N II.

FATHER of great warriors, Treunmor,
Whose high dwelling is in fierce wind,
'Mong the dark-red bolts of the skies,
When the lightning pierces the clouds,
Open the lurid hall of storms, 5
Let the bards come with sound of song,
From the time that has passed away ;
Let them come with their feeble harps.
'Tis no shade that dwells in dull mist,
No hunter by the plain's few streams, 10
But Oscar of the cars it is
From the field of war and fierce battles.
Sudden has been thy change, my son,
From thy figure on dark Moi-Lena.
The blast turns thee subject at will, 15
When high sounds its strength in the sky.
Wilt thou see to our feeble father
By a sounding stream of the night ?

Morbheinn's heroes sleep on the plain ;
 They have lost no son from renown. 20
 Ye have lost one mighty in battle,
 Ye chieftains of high-sounding Morbheinn.
 What hero could match the strong youth,
 Amid the fierce conflicts of war
 Like the heavy swell of great waters ? 25
 But why should my spirit be sad,
 When it ought to kindle in danger ?—
 When Erin is at hand in strength.
 Fionngal is alone 'gainst a host.
 My brave sire shall not be alone 30
 While a spear by me can be raised.
 I quickly advanced in my arms,
 With my ear to the night's faint voice.
 Unheard was conquering Fillan's shield ;
 My soul feared for the king's fleet son. 35
 Why should the brown-haired hero fall ?
 Why should foes come o'er in the night ?
 Indistinct was their far-off noise,
 Like sad sound from the lake of Lego
 When the water ebbs on each side, 40
 On mild days when the frost gives way,
 And the ice is breaking and roaring ;
 Lara's race watch the vault of heaven,
 Predicting to themselves a storm.
 Fillan was seen, silent and dark, 45
 Leaning against the rock of Mora.
 He heard the dull cry of the foe ;
 A tremor of joy stirred his soul.
 The sound of my steps struck his ear ;

Quick he brandished with sound his spear. 50

“Does the son of night come in peace ?
Or wilt thou with strife meet my frown ?
These are foes, the foes of the king ;
Speak softly, or else feel my steel.
Here with one that’s weak he’ll not stand, 55
Who is shield to the chief of Morbheinn.”

“Let not feeble nor idle stand
The children of gentle-eyed Clatho.
Fionngal is alone in old age ;
Shadows close round his going days. 60
But the king of chiefs has two sons
That ought to be dazzling in war—
That should be like the fire of hills
To his steps while he sets like a ray.”

“Son of Fionngal,” said the youth promptly,
“Not long has my hand borne the spear ; 66
The marks of my sword are not many,
But no little fire is my soul.
Bolga’s chiefs are thronging around
The shield of Cathmor of free cups ; 70
Great their muster o’er on the hill.
Shall I thitherward stretch my steps ?
In speed I yield to Oscar only,
In contests on the hills of Cona.”

“Towards them approach not thou, Fillan ;
Let not the youth without fame fall ; 76
My name has been heard of in song ;
When it must be, I shall go over.
From the dark robe of tranquil night,
I shall see to its full the host. 80

But why hast thou spoken of Oscar ?
 Why wakened the sigh of my breast ?
 Let the mighty chief be forgotten,
 Until storms depart from our side.

Let not sorrow have place in danger, 85
 Nor sad tears dim the eyes of heroes.

Sires ere now forgot their brave sons,
 Till the close of contests with arms.

But their grief then returned anew,

With clear strains from sorrowing bards. 90

“ Conar, the brave brother of Trathal,
 Was chief of men whose doom is death.
 With blood of foes by a thousand streams,
 Erin’s glens were filled with his fame,
 Like a gentle breeze of soft wind. 95

The great clans of Ullin assembled ;

They invited the king of arms,

The king from great sires of the hills,
 Selma’s race of vigorous heroes.

Erin’s chiefs arose in the south, 100

In the deep gloom of their great wrath ;

In the dark cave of Muma crowded,

They in whispers smothered their words.

‘ Often,’ they said, ‘ about the hill

Are seen the bare spectres of men, 105

Disclosing their bent dark-red forms

From the bald broken rocks of ocean,

Recalling the fame of the Bolgs.

Why,’ they said, ‘ should Conar be king,

The son of fierce strangers from Morbheinn ? ’

Like torrents they came from the hill, 111

With the sound of their hundred clans.
Conar, the chief, was like a rock ;
Breaking, they rolled down from his sword.
But they often returned anew ; 115
Thy children fell in battle, Selma ;
The king stood 'midst the graves of heroes,
With his face bowed to earth in grief.
His soul took him under control ;
He set a mark and stone on the hill, 120
Where the chief would fall with renown,
When came in his strength under shield,
From the clouds of Morbheinn, great Trathal,
The brother of Conar, great chief.
But the hero came not alone ; 125
By his side without guile was Colgar,
Colgar, son of the king of arms,
And the maiden of calm blue eyes.
" Like Treunmor in a robe of lightning,
Descending from the hall of storms, 130
In thunder from land sending turmoil
On dark ocean's ridge under clouds,
Even so was Colgar in battle,
Consuming and wasting the field.
Great joy had his sire in the chief. 135
A lone arrow came to the hero ;
His tomb rose on the hill without tears.
The king will avenge his great son.
Treunmor shone in the strife like lightning ;
The Bolgi with loss left the land. 140
" When peace came to the field of death,
And blue waves bore the chief to Morbheinn,

Then the king remembered his son ;
From a hundred silent fell tears.

Three times called the bards of song,
Beside the caves of huge cold waves,
The spirit of conquering Colgar,
To his hills from the land of battles.
He heard them in his lazy mist.

Trathal put his sword in a cave,
Mean of joy to his son in death."

"Colgar, son of Trathal," said Fillan,
"Thou wast famed, though young, among men.
The king did not look on my sword,
Which shone at the time on the plain. 155
I'm going along with the people,
And coming with conquest, unfamed.
Our foes are approaching us, chief ;
There is noise on the misty hill ;
The noise of their feet is like thunder, 160
As wildly it rolls underground,¹
When the mountains shake their green trees,
Though no breath of wind is astir
On the dark cold brow of the sky."

Ossian quickly turned on his spear. 165
I raised a blaze with trees on the field ;
I sent forth the sound on the wind.
Conquering Cathmor halted his step ;
He stood like a glittering rock
Amid the straying winds of night, 170
When the blast the waterfall grasps,

¹ This also seems to refer to earthquake.

Compressing it close under ice.

It was so stood the friend of strangers;

The breeze of the hills raised his locks—

Greatest hero of Erin's race,

175

King of Atha of great dark streams.

“Fonnar, chief of the bards,” said Cathmor,

“Call over the leaders of Erin;

Call Cormar of the dark-red locks;

Call Malthos of countenance fierce;

180

Let gloomy Maronnan come o'er,

And Foldath in his foward pride;

Let me see red-eyed Turloch of swords;

Forget not Hidala, the chief

Of sweet voice in the greatest danger,

185

Like the sound of slow-falling rain

At evening on the withered fields,

By Atha of scant failing streams;

Calm its sound on the grassy mead,

As broken thunder leaves the sky.”

190

They quickly approached under arms;

Every face at his word was bowed,

As if spoke from the clouds a ghost,

From their fathers coursing through night.

Terrible was their dark-red gleam,

195

Like Brumo's linn falling with sound,

When the lightning darts through the gloom

Of storm in the traveller's eye,

Who quakes in distress as he moves,

Awaiting the sun from the east.

200

“Is it joy to Foldath,” said the king,

“To shed blood in the strife of night?

Are his strokes few on stormy fields
 When the beam of day blazes bright ?
 Our foes are not many from ocean ; 205
 Why should a robe of gloom shroud us ?
 To the valiant pleasant is light
 When warding off harm from their land.
 Thy counsel is vain, chief of Moma ;
 Morbheinn's eye is not closed by lids ; 210
 The brave chiefs like an eagle watch
 On the high mountain's mossy cliffs.
 'Neath clouds be each chief and his host,
 In massy strength, and with high sound.
 In light to the east let me go 215
 To meet with the hundreds at Bolga.
 Dreadful was the hero, now low,
 Borbal, the son of smiting Dubh-shuil."

" It was not without marks," said Foldath,
 " That my steps confronted the chiefs ; 220
 In light I contended in battle
 With Cairbre in wars of the hills.
 But his stone rose without a tear ;
 The king of Erin's grave had no bard.
 Shall the great man's foemen have joy 225
 On the mossy cliffs of the hills ?
 My true friend the hero has been ;
 Much we spoke about other times,
 In the hushed retreats of the glens,
 In Moma, the cave of high chiefs, 230
 When thou wast a mere tiny boy,
 Chasing thistles over the field.
 With Moma's heroes at my side,

I'll dislodge the foe with my sword
 From the dark retreats of the rocks.
 Fionngal, Selma's hoary-haired king,
 Shall fall without fame on the heath."

"Dost thou think, man of feeble arm,"
 Said Cathmor, with a shade of anger—
 "Dost thou think the hero shall fall
 Without song or renown in Erin ?

Should the bards be condemned to silence
 Beside the tomb of Selma's king,
 Their love would in whispers break forth ;
 The soul of the king would have fame. 245

'Tis when thou wilt in battle fall
 That the bards will forget to sing.
 Forbidding and gloomy thou art,
 Though thine arm is mighty in battle,
 Like great gathering storms of the sky. 250

Shall Cathmor forget Erin's king
 In his dark narrow house, the grave ?
 Forgotten by me shall be Cairbre,
 My brave brother, whose fame I'll cherish ?

I observed the gleam of delight
 At my glorious deeds, that passed
 Through his mind, though under dark clouds,
 When with fame I returned from the hill
 To Atha of torrents and storms."

Stately, at command of the king, 260
 Each warrior hied to his clan ;
 They defiled round the moorland rocks,
 Casting shadows in the bright stars,
 Like billows in a rocky bay,

Under winds in the strife of night. 265
 The king stretched himself by an oak,
 With his gashed bossy shield in gloom.
 At a rock by the hero's side
 Stood the stranger of charms from ocean,
 The beam whom he loved in her locks, 270
 From Luman of mountains and roes.
 In the distance a voice was heard
 From Fonnar of visions and lays,
 On the mighty doings of old.
 The lays were at intervals lost 275
 In the roar of loud-sounding Lubar.
 "Crothar's residence," said the bard,
 "Was in Atha of the blue streams.
 'Mid a thousand trees, on the slope,
 The hall of high banqueting rose ; 280
 The people's great gathering was there,
 Round the feast of the blue-eyed king.
 Who, among the conquering chiefs,
 Was equal to Crothar in fame ?
 Heroes kindled before the chief ; 285
 Maidens heaved in secret the sigh ;
 Famed thy chief, Alnecma of hills,
 The leader of Bolga's dark tribes.
 "He started the chase in sweet Ullin,
 On the mossy ridge of Druim-ard. 290
 From a wood looked the maid of heroes,
 Cathmin's daughter, praised by the bards,
 Of bright blue eyes and smoothest hands
 In secret she sighed for the hero.
 The lowered face of the maid from chiefs 295

Was amid her brown wandering locks.
Through night looked the moon, which was full,
On her white arms moving below.
Her thoughts were on Crothar of songs,
In the dark dull season of dreams. 300

“On three days Cathmin spread the feast ;
On the fourth, noise started the deer.
To the chase upon knolls went Caomh-lamh,
With steps like the cadence of song ;
She met in with Crothar, the chief, 305
In the lone strait path of the hill ;
From her hand fell arrow and bow ;
She slowly averted her face,
Half concealed beneath her smooth locks.
Quickly roused was the hero’s love ; 310
He brought the maid of charms to Atha ;
Close by her the bards raised the song ;
Joy reigned with the daughter of Cathmin.

“Wrath awoke in Turloch of blows,
A young chief who gave heart and mind 315
To the white-handed, mild-eyed maid.
To give battle he came to Atha,
To Alnecma of the brown hinds.
To the conflict Cormul went forth,
A brother to the king of cars ; 320
He went forth, but the hero fell ;
Sighs broke on the hill from his people.
Tall and silent across the streams
Came dark-frowning in strength the king ;
He expelled the foe from the land, 325
From Alnecma of woods, and returned

Rejoicing Caomh-lamha of harps.
 Battles were fought ; blood flowed on blood ;
 Seen at night were a thousand ghosts
 On the skirts of Erin's high clouds. 330

From the south gathered each great chief
 Round the high-sounding shield of Crothar.
 Bearing death he advanced across
 To the difficult place of foes.

Tears fell from the maidens of Ullin, 335
 As they looked at the stormy height ;
 No young hunter came from the hill ;
 Stillness darkened over the land ;
 Sorrowful and slow was the breeze
 In the scanty grass on his grave. 340

“ Like an eagle of heaven descending
 With its sounding wings by its side,
 When with joy it outstrips the wind,
 Came the war-waging son of Treunmor,
 Brave Conar of the smiting arm, 345
 From Morbheinn of heroes and trees.
 On green Erin he rolled his strength,
 With dark cruel death in his sword,
 When half seen with his stately steps.
 The race of Bolga fled from the chief, 350
 Like traveller from a swoln stream
 That bursts from the desert of storms,
 Uptearing the earth from the hill
 With its heavy high-sounding trees.
 To battle rushed Crothar the brave ; 355
 Alnecma, o'ercome, left the field ;
 The king left, but slow were his steps—

In soul crushed with sorrow and wrath.
 He afterwards shone in the south,
 But faintly as the autumn sun
 When he comes in a robe of clouds
 To Lara of torrents and storms ;
 On the withered field shall be dew,
 But the light shall be weak and sad."

" Why to me should the bard recall," 365
 Said Cathmor the hero, " the brave
 Who fled from the field, though renowned ?
 Came a ghost from clouds to his ear,
 To scare Cathmor off from the field
 With vain tales of the olden time ? 370
 Ye who dwell in the skirts of clouds,
 Your voice is to me like a blast
 That seizes the thistle's dark top
 And strews its grey beard on the stream.
 A low voice is within my breast, 375
 That with sound strikes no other ear ;
 His soul governs the king of Erin,
 And he'll not abandon the strife."

The bard settled down in the night,
 Bending without light o'er a stream ; 380
 While his thoughts were of days in Atha,
 When his voice was heard by the brave.
 The tears were falling down his cheeks,
 The cold wind whistled through his beard.

Sleep fell on the blue eyes of Erin. 385
 To the hero's eyes came no sleep ;
 For darkly in his spirit rising
 Was Cairbre, the cruel, in shade ;

He saw him without tune or lay,
Floating on a blast of the night. 390

He stirred, and directing his steps
Round the outskirts of all the hundreds,
He struck the bossy shield of blows.
To my ear came the sound through mist
On the dark mossy brow of Mora. 395

“ Young Fillan, the foe is astir ;
I aright hear the shield of battles.
Stand thou, hero, in the hill’s hollow ;
I shall partly observe the braves.
Should the foe tread o’er me in death, 400
From thy boss raise aloud the sound ;
Rouse Fionngal on the mountain’s ridge,
Lest his fame and glory depart.”

As I moved in my sounding arms,
With great steps leaping o’er the streams 405
That flowed through darkness before brave
Atha’s king of battles and blows,
He quickly advanced with his spear
On my path through the field in mist.
A fierce conflict there would have been, 410
Like the ghosts of the dead in strife,
When, bending from departing clouds,
They roll winds on the ridgy hills—
Had not Ossian beheld on high
The hard helmet of Erin’s kings, 415
With its eagle-wing spreading round,
Amid the blustering of cold winds ;
Among the feathers glittered a star.
I restrained my spear in the night.

“Near me is the helmet of kings ! 420
 Who art thou, son of darksome skies ?
 Shall thy spear, great Ossian, have fame,
 When the warrior falls in battle ?”
 Fast he lowered the spear from his head,
 While before me he grew in stature ; 425
 He stretched forth his hand in the night,
 And spoke the noble words of kings :
 “Friend of the idle ghosts of heroes,
 Are we met in the dark together ?
 Why, chief, have I not seen thy steps 430
 On blest days in Atha of harps ?
 Why against thee uplift the spear ?
 The sun shall see on fields the conflict
 When to slaughter rush the two kings,
 Brightening in the glorious strife. 435
 Men hereafter shall view the spot
 In great dread of the olden time ;
 They shall deem it a place of ghosts,
 While it awes and comforts their minds.”
 “And shall they forget,” I replied, 440
 “The place where the brave met in peace ?
 Shall remembrance of war be always
 So pleasant to the pride of chiefs ?
 Shall we not with joy see the fields
 Where our mighty sires spread the feast ? 445
 But our eyes shall be filled with tears
 On the slope where battled the brave.
 This very stone shall rise aloft,
 Among the moss of dusky hills,
 With language to the coming years. 450

Stone of heroes, when thou art lost,
When Lubar's stream flows not to ocean,
The traveller shall bend his steps
To sleep on the hill of the brave ;
Like a dark ring the moon shall move
O'er his head as he dreams of ghosts ;
We shall rise in his vacant sight,
Waking memory of the field.
But wherefore hast thou turned so dark,
Son of Borbar froward in ire ?" 460

“Son of Fionngal of arms, forgotten
We shall not be, floating on wind ;
Our actions in brightness unclouded
Shall be aye in the eyes of bards.
Dark shadows are resting on Atha ; 465
The brave king has no song or tune.
A lightsome radiance ever broke
On Cathmor, from his troubled mind,
Like the moon when she looks from clouds,
Amid the dark-red bolts of night.” 470

“Son of Erin,” I said, “my wrath
Goes not after him to the grave ;
My hate, like an eagle of heaven,
Leaves the enemy crushed in dust ;
Let him hear the bards with their songs ; 475
The chief shall have joy in the wind.”

The spirit of the king rose high ;
From his side he drew forth his sword ;
He put it shining bright in my hand ;
As in silence I heaved the sigh, 480
Brave Cathmor of conquests departed ;

Mine eye followed him as he went
 Like a great, shining spectre's form,
 When the shadowy ghosts of the dead
 Meet the traveller at dead of night 485
 In the hill's dark robe under wind ;
 His words will be like songs of old ;
 With morning from the sea comes dripping
 The spectre half composed of mist.

Who is yon that cometh from Lubar, 490
 From the misty robe of the glens ?
 On his head is the dew of heaven ;
 His footsteps are slow under grief.
 Who but Caruill from bygone times,
 From Tura's cave of mighty heroes. 495
 I see it obscure in the rock
 Through mist drawing up on the steep.
 Perhaps the great hero Cuchullin
 Is there on the wings of the wind,
 That is bending trees by its side. 500
 Sweet is song in the tranquil morning
 From the greatly-famed bard of Erin.

“ The billows are passing and breaking,
 Closely crowded in their great fear,
 At hearing thee rising with sound 505
 From thy chamber of waves, O sun !
 Thou art awful in all thy strength,
 Son of heaven, when death goes forth
 In thy locks of resplendent beauty—
 When thou shadest with thy vast clouds 510
 A great withering host of people.
 But sweet are thy beams to the hunter

Sitting in the loud-sounding storm,
 When, looking from the broken clouds,
 Thou brightenest his wetted locks, 515
 As he looks abroad on the glen,
 And the waterfalls sparkling bright,
 When the deer descend from the hill.
 How long wilt thou rise upon strife,
 Like a great bloody shield of heaven ? 520
 I see the sudden death of chiefs,
 Like darkness clinging round thy face.
 About whom are the words of Caruill ?
 Is there grief on the stainless brow ?
 No darkness approaches his course ; 525
 There is joy in his glowing fire,
 In his dazzling, unclouded light.
 But thou in thy day too wilt fail ;
 The dark time of doom will o'ertake thee,
 When, shrivelling, thou'l reel in thy sky. 530

“ To me pleasant is the bard's voice—
 Pleasant to my spirit is song,
 Like the gentle shower of the morning
 Passing o'er the glen with soft sound,
 When, emerging slow from the hill, 535
 The sun looks through mountain mist.
 This, bard, is no time for song,
 Or to sit down enjoying tunes ;
 For Fionngal is armed in the glen.
 See the gleam from his conquering shield ! 540
 His face darkens amid his locks,
 At Erin so dense on the hill.

“ Caruill, seest thou not the grave

By the sounding stream of the rock ?
Three stones with grey heads are on high, 545
'Neath an oak that bends from the height.
There a king is darksome in dust,
The brother of Cathmor himself ;
Give his soul anew to the wind ;
Open heaven's hall to the chief. 550
With song chase his sorrow away
From the spirit of dark-red Cairbre."

T I G H M O R A.

D U A N III.

WHO is he by blue-flowing Lubar,
'Neath the curving slant hill of deer,
Tall, leaning his back to a tree
Which the dark mountain blast has riven ?

Who is it but Cumhal's great son, 5
Kindling 'mid the last of his battles,
With grey locks on the mountain wind,
While he draws dreadful Luno's sword ?

His fierce eye is on Moilen's field,
On brave foes that are darkly moving. 10
Dost thou not hear the king's voice rising,
Like the rushing streams of the hills,
When sounding they come from the knolls
On fields 'neath the withering sun ?

“Strongly flanked, the foe is descending. 15
Race of wooded Selma, be up ;
Be ye like the rocks of our land,
Around whose dark sides wind the streams.

To my soul comes a ray of joy
 At seeing before me the brave ;
 When the foe is feeble around,
 There is heard a sigh from my breast ;
 My fear is that death may encroach
 On this fame that after me floats.

20

Who will lead the strife on the field,
 With Alnecma of mighty men ?
 My time is the dread time of danger ;
 Then keenly shall glisten my sword ;
 Even so did they act of old,
 From Treunmor, the ruler of winds ;
 Even so went down to the field
 Great Trathal beneath his blue shield."

30

Round the king fast gathered the chiefs,
 Every stern one eager for battle,
 With a name for chivalrous deeds ;
 Each eye was turned slowly on Erin.
 But far in advance of the heroes
 Stood the hard-hitting son of Morni ;
 The warrior stood alone in silence.

35

Who heard not of service from Gall,
 Of great soul illumined with deeds ?
 His hand grasped in secret his sword,
 The sword he brought over from Strumon,
 When Morni was hidden from danger.

40

Then Fillan from Selma stood by
 On a spear 'mid his waving locks.
 Three times he raised slowly his eyes
 On Fionngal, with labouring breast ;
 Low sank without meaning his voice ;

45

In battle's gloom Fillan was not. 50
 He instantly hastened his steps,
 Then stood in distress o'er a stream,
 While the tears flowed fast down his cheek ;
 Then from time to time, with his spear,
 The grey thistle of the field struck. 55
 He was not unseen by the king,
 Who observed him with sidelong eyes ;
 He beheld his son, with emotions
 Of gladness in his bosom rising.
 He turned in his greatness of soul, 60
 In silence, to Mora of green woods ;
 He concealed his tears with his locks.
 Then was heard the voice of the chief :
 "First son of Morni of hard arms,
 Thou rock of the hills in a storm, 65
 Conduct thou my warriors to battle,
 For the race of the brave and Cormac ;
 For no stripling's rod is thy spear,
 No flash without substance thy steel.
 Son of Morn' of strong steeds on the field, 70
 See thy foes ; go forward, and smite.
 Take thou, Fillan, note of the chief,
 That has never in strife been slow ;
 His great soul to a third wont burn
 In the loud dreadful strife with shields ; 75
 Then, Fillan, observe thou the chief,
 That is strong as Lubar from hills
 Without foam, without aught of noise.
 From Mora of clouds, from the ridge,
 Fionngal will look down on the strife. 80

Be, Ossian, at thy father's arm
Against this mountain-stream that wastes him.
Then leave off your singing, ye bards;
Let Selma move to the bare plain;
For the last of my fields it is; 85
Put no feeble fire in the conflict."

As suddenly rises the wind
With strong rush on the ridge of ocean,
When the hideous darkness raises
A gaunt spectre on the rolling waves 90
Round the island of rocky sides,
The black island—dwelling of mist,
Amid the deep, in the grey of years—
As dreadful as that was the sound
That rose from the host on the field. 95
At their head was Gall, with high steps
Leaping o'er the grey-shining streams ;
The bards raised a song by his side ;
He from time to time struck his shield.
In the shroud of blasts from the hill
Indistinctly was heard the song. 100

“On Croma,” ‘twas thus spoke the bards,
“A flood shall burst at dead of night,
Swelling in the windings of streams,
Till the morning’s rays come with light; 105
It will then descend from the hill,
Whose rocks of a hundred trees glisten.
Let my steps be distant from Croma,
For death is for ever around it.
Be ye like the torrents of Mora,
Men of Morbheinn of darkest clouds. 110

“Who is rising from Clutha’s car ?
The hill darkens before the king ;
The dusky wood echoes the sound,
In the lightning-flash of his steel.
Behold him amongst his strong foes,
Like a wrathfully-bounding spectre,
That scatters the clouds from the mount,
As he rides on the whirlwind’s steed !
Who but Morni of snorting horses ?
Then be thou like thy father, Gall.

"In the distance Selma is open ;
Hands of bards are trembling on harps ;
Ten heroes bring oak from the height
To the spacious banqueting-hall. 125
The sunbeans are bright on the hill ;
Wind-billows are dark on the grass.
But why art thou, Selma, so still ?
The king is coming back with fame.
Though dreadful the high sound of strife, 130
His face has the brightness of peace.
The high sound of battle was dreadful,
But the king shall return in triumph.
Then be thou like thy father, Fillan."

They marched to sweet strains from the
bards, 135
While their arms above them were waving
Like rushes of the waste in autumn
When they yield in the face of wind.
In his steel stood the king on Mora,
While the mist rose around his shield, 140
That was tied to a bough of the steep

On the darkly-red rock of Cormul.
 In silence I stood by his side,
 With my eyes turned to Cromla's wood,
 In fear lest I'd see on the field

145

Hosts engaged in no idle conflict—
 When my soul would spring into battle,
 My step half advance on the heath.

There was brightness around my steel;
 I resembled a stream from Tromo,

150

That cold wind has put under ice
 'Neath the sable mantle of night.

Yon a boy shall see on the height,
 Bright under warm rays from the east;

155

He will turn his ears in his head,
 At the silence wondering greatly.

"Twas not bending over a stream
 Was Cathmor, like an ardent youth,
 When sweet stillness hushes the plain.
 He hither advanced to give battle,
 Like a high dark wave from great ocean.
 When he saw the king upon Mora,
 High kindled the pride of his soul.

160

"Shall Atha's own king strike the blow,
 And the king of the brave not present?
 Move, Foldath, to purpose my friends;
 A firebeam unerring art thou."

165

Foldath issued forthwith from Moma
 Like a cloud, the robe-home of ghosts.
 He drew from his haunch by his side
 His hard sword, like a raging fire,
 While he ordered to move to battle

170

In haste every clan on the heath.
 Like billows of hoary backs rising,
 The host poured in strength on the plain. 175
 Stately and pompous were his steps,
 His red eye was wrathful and squint.
 He called Cormul's chief from the dun,
 From Ratho of towers, and he heard.

“The pathway is, Cormul, in sight; 180
 It is green there beyond the foe;
 Send thy mighty warriors over,
 Lest Selma, o'ercome, should escape,
 And my sword be reft of its fame.

Bards of Erin of greenest hue, 185
 Let no voice reach the ear with song;
 Morbheinn's race shall fall by the wave
 'Neath the sword, without bard or lay,
 Brave Cairbre's bad foes from the north.

The pedestrian shall meet at dusk 190
 On Lena the dark mountain-mist
 Round their ghosts, which it bears along,
 Rising o'er the lake of grey reeds.
 They shall never forsake the land
 For the hall of winds without song.” 195

Cormul as he travelled grew dark;
 His retainers grew dark behind him;
 They crouched at a rock of the steep.
 Said Gall to young Fillan from Selma,
 While his look was sent slowly after 200
 The black-eyed warrior from Ratho:

“Seest thou yonder the course of Cormul?
 Thine arm shall be brawny and strong,

When that hero thou'l^t put aside ;
Then return anew unto Gall.

205

Let me here fall down in the strife,
Amid the great gathering of shields."

The doleful sign of death went forth,
The dread deep sound of Morni's shield.
His commands rolled from Gall : above,
Fionngal rose on the hill of Mora.

210

He beheld them from side to side
Swaying as if one in the strife.

Cathmor from Atha's hundred streams
Stood gleaming on his own dark hill.

215

The two kings were like ghosts of heaven,
Standing by themselves on two clouds
When they empty abroad the winds,
Rousing the wild waves of great ocean.

The blue billows after them roll,
With traces of the tracks of whales—
They in silence radiate afar,
As the wind slow lifts their mist-locks.

220

A flash of lightning is in the sky !
What is it but Morni's dread sword ?
Death is on his dark path behind thee,
Hero of gashing strokes in battle ;
Thou foldest the men in thy wrath.

225

Like a young tree torn from the mount,
With its branches all by its side,
Fell Turlath of high noble heart.
His chaste wife, in an empty dream,
At home stretches forth her hands—
Her white arms—for her chief's return,

230

As she sleeps beside the great streams, 235
 Amid her heavy wandering locks.

His spectre it is, gentle fair ;
 Thy hero reposes on earth.

Listen not to the winds of waves,
 Nor take them for his sounding shield, 240
 Broken by arms beside his streams ;
 Its sound has for ever been stilled.

No peace had Foldath, nor his arm,
 As he waded and swam in blood.

He and Conal met in the strife, 245
 Dealing blows with hard ringing swords.

Wherefore should mine eye see the chief ?
 Thou art, Conal, in thy hoar locks,

Thou, who hast been the friend of strangers,
 In Dunlora of mossy rocks ; 250

When the skies converged in the glen,
 The unstinted feast would be spread ;
 The race of strangers would hear the wind
 In great comfort around thy board.

Son of Carthun of conquering sword, 255
 Why thyself hast thou stretched in blood ?

A withered tree bends o'er thy head ;
 Close by thee is a broken shield ;

Thy red blood is on the hill-stream,
 Thou breaker of beautiful shields. 260

Ossian upraised his spear in wrath ;
 Gall rushed o'er the slope against Foldath ;
 The feeble took flight from his side ;
 His undaunted eye was on Moma.

The chiefs raised the dark spears of death ; 265

Quickly all unseen came an arrow
 Which at once pierced the hand of Gall ;
 On the earth fell his sword with sound.
 Young Fillan bore Cormul's great shield,
 Which he spread in front of the chief. 270
 Foldath uttered a piercing cry,
 Which aroused to action the field,
 Like a blast from the mountain's ridge,
 That upraises the smouldering flames
 Around Lumon of sounding trees. 275

“Son of Clatho of mild blue eyes,
 Young Fillan,” said Gall, “thou thyself
 Art a firebeam of heaven high,
 That falls on the dark roaring ocean,
 And binds up the wings of the storms ; 280
 Cormul prostrate fell by thy sword.
 Thou'rt young in the fame of thy sires ;
 But move not so hastily, chief,
 Without aid from my shield and spear.
 I am like a wraith on the hill ; 285
 But my voice yet aloud shall rise ;
 Selma's children shall hear its sound,
 And bygone achievements recall.”

His voice sped on the mountain wind ;
 His people at once struck in battle ; 290
 Himself they had frequently heard
 In the chase at Sruthmon of chiefs,
 When he called them to roe and deer.
 He stood high in the midst of battle,
 Like an oak in the gloom of storms, 295
 Darkly shrouded from time to time,

Then revealing its hoary head ;
 The hunter will turn up his eye
 From the dell of rushes and streams.

My spirit goes after thee, Fillan, 300
 In thy bright onward course of fame ;
 Thou drivest the foe from thy presence ;
 E'en great Foldath flees from the field.
 But the night fell black under clouds ;
 Heard sounding was the horn of Cathmor ; 305
 Selma heard a word from the king
 From Mora of forests in mist,
 While the bards poured forth their own strains
 Like dew on the closing of battle.

“ Who cometh from Sruthmon of burns 310
 In her beautiful flowing locks,
 Mournful and with slow-moving steps,
 With her blue eyes turned towards Erin ?
 Why is gentle Emhir in grief ?
 Who is like the noble in fame ? 315
 He went down in the midst of battle,
 And returned like a meteor of heaven ;
 He in wrath raised his dark-blue sword ;
 They subsided in fear from Gall.

“ Comfort, like a breeze from a glen, 320
 Comes over the face of the king ;
 He remembers the battles of old,
 And days of his brave warring sires,
 While he sees his son in renown.
 Like gladdening from a cloudless sun, 325
 That looks on a tree that has grown
 'Neath his rays on the mountain's brow,

And which waves all alone its boughs
On the valley's side ; so the king
Was in joy about his son Fillan.

330

“ Like the thunder's course on the hill,
When Lara's plain is dark and still,
Even so was the march of Selma,
Pleasant in its strength to my ear.

The great sound of returning chiefs

335

Was like eagle's to the dark rocks,

After having torn up the prey,

The brown young of deer on the hill.

Your fathers have joy on their clouds,

Children from the hoar streams of Selma.”

340

These were the night words of sweet bards
On Mora, the high hill of deer.

A gleam rose from a hundred oaks

That winds broke and rolled from Cormul.

Feast and shell were spread on the ground ;

Heroes sat in the shade in arms.

Fionngal was present in his strength ;

On his helm an eagle's wing sounded ;

A soft breeze sprang up from the west,

And blew through a third of the night.

345

Long time did the king look around ;

Then he raised up aloud his voice :

“ My spirit to pleasure is lost,

Seeing the great break in my friends.

A great tree has fallen to earth,

355

And the wind beats strongly on Selma.

Where, Lora of towers, is thy chief ?

Why is Conal not at the feast ?

When regarded he not his friends
 'Mid the sound of his spacious hall ? 360

Wherefore are ye mute in my presence ?
 Thou wilt, Conal, fall down no more !
 May thy spirit have comfort, chief,
 Like radiance from the shining sun.

Be thy journey quick to thy fathers, 365
 Amid thunder, till falls the wind.
 Thy spirit is like lightning, Ossian ;
 Brighten memory of the king ;
 Recall his conflicts in the glens,
 When at first he went forth to war. 370

Conal, hoary have been thy locks ;
 Thy youth, hero, was mixed with mine ;
 To the mountain, Carthonn one day
 Sent our bows to the bounding roes,
 To Dunlora of frowning peaks." 375

“ Many,” myself said, “ were the songs,
 On our journey across to Erin,
 Sweet isle of a hundred green glens.
 Often did we raise up the sails
 On the blue greatly-rolling waves, 380
 When we came, in days that are gone,
 With aid to the brave race of Conar.
 The sound of high conflict arose
 On Alneema’s hills in the south,
 At flowing Duthula of waves, 385
 Where light foam floats under the linn.
 With Cormac there went down to battle
 Black Carthonn, the hero from Selma.
 Nor alone did the chief go down ;

Conal in his ringlets of youth 390
Beside him was lifting the spear ;
At thy word they moved to the strife,
With assistance to Erin's king.
Like the mighty strength of great ocean,
Bolga gathered to the fierce conflict, 395
With Colc-ullamh, leader of hosts,
The chief of Atha of blue waves.
Each on each waged war on the field ;
Cormac flamed on the edge of battle,
Brightly as the forms of his fathers. 400
But far forward, the king's support,
Black Carthonn of woods, smote the foe.
Nor slumbered Conal's arm beside
His great sire on the sloping heath ;
But Colc-ullamh mastered the field. 405
Like a mist that, rolling, departs,
His heroes left Cormac, the chief.
Slaying, flashed the sword of black Carthonn ;
Conal flamed with steel and great shield,
Sheltering their friends in retreat, 410
Like rocks upon a hill of cliffs,
Whose fir-covered summits resound.
Night fell on Duthula of storms ;
The chiefs paced in silence the plain.
A great stream that came down from hills, 415
Carthonn to a third could not leap.
'Wherefore standest thou here, my sire ?
I am hearing the foe behind.'
"Then flee, Conal, flee from the plain ;
My strength is exhausted and weak ; 420

Wounded, I withdrew from the field ;
Let a hero rest in the night.'

'Thou wilt not be alone,' said Conal,
In anguish and trouble of soul ;

'Like an eagle's wing is my shield
Twixt harm to the chief and his foes.'

He bent in the dark o'er his father ;
Black Carthonn of fame was at rest.

"Day awakened, and the night fell ;
No bard was in sight on the hill,

His steps bending under his thoughts.
How could Conal forsake the grave,

And his fame unsung by the bards ?
He bent his bow on the haunt of deer,

Fared in secret among the rocks,
Seven nights laid his head on the grave ;

His brave sire was in his cold dreams,
In the black tempest's skirt all pale,

Like mist rising upward from Lego.

Colgar thitherward bent his steps,
The bard of high-sounding Tighmora.

Black Carthonn of arms had his praise,
And shone on the wind, his abode."

"Sweet to me," said the king, "is praise
Of chiefs at the head of the brave,

To whom the bow is strong in need,
When softened by grief without fear.

It is thus my name shall have fame,
When awakes through the skill of bards

A bright gleam in my rising soul.
Caruill, mighty leader of arms,

425

430

435

440

445

450

Take a bard, and set up the grave ;
Conal this night will have rest,
Asleep in his dark narrow house ;
Let not the great warrior's soul
Be astray on the dusky wind.

Faintly glimmering on Moi-Lena,
The moonlight is seen among trees
That bend from the sides of the glens ;
Raise stones beneath the feeble beams
To all who have fallen in battle.

Chieftains they were not, but their hands
Were strong as heroes' in the strife,
My strength 'mid the danger of arms,
My rock in the season of darts,
The mountain upon which arose
The sounding eagle-wing of my fame ;
"Twas they who gave victory brightness :
Then, Caruill, forget not their dust."

Loudly from full a hundred bards
The death-song of the grave rose high.
Before them on the hill went Caruill ;
The noise was like sound of hill-streams
Pouring round his steps as he went.
There was calm in Moi-Lena's glens,
Each under its own winding stream,
Which journeyed between dusky heights.
While leaning apart on my shield,
From the marching bards came sweet voices,
As the strain lowered under their steps ;
Till my fervid spirit burned high ;
Half composed were the mournful words

455

460

465

470

475

480

That floated in song on the wind.
 Even so shall be heard by a tree,
 In some narrow glen of lone hills, 485
 The whispers of spring by its side,
 When its leaves burst about its head,
 Opening to the rays of the sun,
 And waving its branches alone,
 While the mountain-bee hums around. 490
 The hunter with joy sees it waving
 Among the withered and bald rocks.

In the distance young Fillan stood,
 With his helmet on the ground gleaming,
 And his black locks loose round his head ; 495
 Clatho's son was a beam of light.
 He heard the king's voice with delight ;
 The brave hero leaned on his spear.

“ Noble son,” said Fionngal of ears,
 “ I have seen thy great deeds in battle ; 500
 My spirit had joy unalloyed ;
 The fame of our fathers, I said,
 Breaks forth from the heaven of clouds.
 Son of Clatho, valiant art thou,
 But rash in the wars of the hills. 505
 Have thy heroes always behind thee ;
 They're thy strength on the floors of glens.
 Not so did I ever proceed,
 Though I never had fear of foes.
 Thou wilt thus be long time renowned, 510
 And see the agèd's dust and graves.
 Remembrance of the fallen returns,
 The high deeds of years that have been,

When first I descended from ocean
On the island of greenest glens."

515

Every ear to his voice was listening ;
The moon looked abroad from dark clouds ;
From the stream rose a hoary mist,
The grey dwelling of wandering ghosts.

T I G H M O R A.

DUAN IV.

“BENEATH an oak,” thus spoke the king,
“I sat down by the rock of streams,
When Conal rose beyond from ocean
With the spear of black-haired Carthonn.
Far away from us stood the chief, 5
While he turned his eyes on the hill.
In remembrance he had his father
And his steps on that dark-green hill.
I darkened in that very place,
While my thoughts in dejection rose 10
On my soul, like mist on a hill.
Before me passed the kings of Erin ;
I drew forth to its half my sword,
When towards me the chiefs came over,
Calmly raising by turns their eyes. 15
Like dark clouds of the sky were they,
Waiting taunts from my mouth in words,
From my voice that like strong warm wind

Drives blackness and mist from the sky.

“At my word the white sails were spread 20

Against wind that sounded from Cona ;

Three hundred young men from the sea

Inspected the hard boss of battles ;

Aloft on the mast was the shield,

Shining down on the roaring deep. 25

When the night fell from grey to black,

I struck the boss, signal of strife ;

I struck it, and then looked aloft

For the red locks and fire of Iul-Erin ;

Nor long missed the star of the waves, 30

Red-travelling among the clouds.

I followed ocean’s pleasant guide,

Shining cold and faint in its course.

With morn we reached Erin in mist ;

We struck the great haven of Moi-Lena, 35

Whose blue water rolled ’neath the hill

That rose amid the sounding wood.

Cormac kept in his secret hall

From strong Colc-ullamh, chief of spoils.

Nor fled he alone from the hero ; 40

At his side was guileless Roscranna—

Roscranna of charming blue eyes,

The king’s lovely white-handed daughter.

“Pale, grey, on a staff without steel,

Cormac to my footsteps came up ; 45

Faintly smiled the conquering chief,

Whose soul was distracted and sad.

‘I see the dreadful arms of Treunmor ;

Even here are the steps of the king ;

Fionngal is like a sunbeam rising
On a soul that is paling in strife.
Thou art early, chief, in renown ;
But mighty are the foes of Erin,
Like the sound of great streams from hills,
Son of Cumhal of cars and bridles.' 55

“‘‘Although great, they shall be cast down
From my soul when it rises high ;
No race of the weak are our chiefs,
Thou leader of blue-shielded hosts.
Then wherefore should faltering fear 60
Blindly move like a ghost in shade ?
The souls of the brave rise in times
When foemen increase on the hill.
Cast not thou, king of Erin, gloom
On a youth that is rising in war.’’ 65

“The tears of the king fell to earth;
He grasped the hero’s hand in silence.
‘Son of Treunmor, of warlike deeds,
I’ll not cloud the light of thy breast,
That burns with the fire of thy fathers.
I shall, king, behold thy great fame;
The sign of thy marching to battle
Is like lightning in a dark sky.
But await thou, hero, for Cairbre,
My own son, with the aid of arms;
He musters Erin’s race for war
From the streams of glens far away.’

"We came to the hall of the king,
Which rose among the peaceful hills ;
On their sides were dark forest-streams. 80

As old signs of the flight of days,
All round were broad oaks under moss,
And birches that waved in the wind.

Half hid in the wood of the hills
Was Roscranna, who sang of heroes.

85

Her white hand was o'er on the harp ;
I saw her slow-moving blue eyes,
In her movements like a pure spirit,
Half hid in the skirts of dark clouds.

“Three days there was feast on Moi-Lena ; 90

The sweet maiden swam in my thoughts.

Cormac saw me darkening in Erin,
And gave her pure breast to my hand.
She came forth with her gentle eyes
Among locks that heavily flowed.

95

She came ; quickly sprang from the heath
Strong Colc-ullamh ; I raised my spear ;
My sword's gleam was amidst my host ;
Alnecma fled ; crushed fell the foe.

Fionngal, praised by the bards, returned. 100

He is, Fillan, greatly renowned,
Who strikes blows in his people's strength ;
The bards are behind him with song
In the distant land of strong foes.

But he who alone strikes in battle, 105

Few for time are his waning deeds ;

To-day he is shining as light,

To-morrow he slumbers in death ;

His fame is in one fleeting song,

His name of one field is forgotten ;

His lone grave is lost under grass.”

110

The high words of the king were such,
On Mora of forests and roes.

From Cormul in peace came three bards,
Who pleasantly carolled their lays. 115

At the sound gentle slumber fell
On the host's vast skirts under night—
When Caruill and his bards returned
From the high chief's grave at Dunlora.

Morning's voice shall not reach the great 120
Hero in his darksome abode.

Son of Carthonn of sable locks,
Thou'l not hear the trampling of deer
At thy narrow grave on the plain.

As roll in great tumult the clouds 125
Round a gleam midst the gloom of night,
When, brightening in their fulness up,
They shine on an ocean of storms ;
So was the assembling of Erin
Around Cathmor, rising in light. 130

He, the tallest among the chiefs,
Without meaning wielded his spear,
As rose or descended the strain
From Fonnar, whose harp was in tune.

Near him, leaning against a rock, 135
Was modest Suil-mall' of blue eyes,
The pure-bosomed daughter of Conmor,
King of the green island of towers.
To his succour came with blue shield
Great Cathmor of chiefs ; foes were quelled. 140

Suil-malla his movements observed
In the spacious hall of free boards ;

Not unknowing he turned his eye
On the maiden of fair bright locks.

The third day had broken from ocean, 145
When Fili of lays came with song
From the mountains and streamis of Erin.
He spoke of the shield being raised
In Selma of chiefs ; spoke of danger
To Cairbre, the chief of the Bolgs. 150
Cathmor hoisted his sails in Cluba ;
The winds were from the lands beyond.
Three days he remained on the shore,
His eye turned on Conmor's high hill,
The fair stranger aye in his thoughts ; 155
While he constantly heaved the sigh.
Under freshening wind from the sea,
A youth came in mail from the hill
To bear arms with Cathmor of hosts,
On fields amid the din of battle ; 160
It was Suil-malla of white arms,
Concealed beneath a helm of steel ;
Her steps were in the hero's path ;
While her blue eye watched with delight
The great chief encamped by the stream. 165
It was thought by Cathmor the brave
That the charmer's steps were on Lumon,
Approaching the haunts of the deer ;
He supposed that White-hand was there,
Slowly raising her arms in the wind 170
That pleasantly blew from high Erin,
The green land of her own beloved.
He promised to return with oars

And white sails to his downcast love ;
 But the maiden is near thee, Cathmor,
 At the rock of stones, under steel.

The tall forms of chiefs stood around,
 Save Foldath of dark-red eyebrows.
 He, leaning far off to a tree,
 Wrapped his soul, for the time, in pride ; 180
 His locks, clustering, whirled in the wind,
 While he hummed a tune in his mouth ;
 He then struck the tree in his wrath,
 And hastened perplexed to the king.

Tall and silent, beside the rock, 185
 Stood Hidalla, the youthful chief ;
 His locks were spreading round his temples,
 While the tresses wandered in light.
 His voice was delightful in Claonrath,
 The glen wherein dwelt his brave sires— 190
 Delightful when he struck the harp
 In the hall by the sounding stream.

“ King of Erin,” said the chief softly,
 “ This the time is to spread the feast ;
 Raise the words of bards on the plain, 195
 To put from us the passing night.
 The soul goes more keenly from song
 To the dreadful onset of battle.
 Gloom settled on Erin all round ;
 From Ben unto Ben leaned the clouds, 200
 With their murky skirts rolling up.
 Far away on the sides of hills
 Are the awful steps of grey ghosts—
 The ghosts of those who fell in battle,

As they bend from their blasts to song. 205
 Let there rise from Cathmor of harps
 What brightens the brave in the wind."

"Each man that is dead be forgotten,"
 Said Foldath in terrible wrath;
 "Have not I yielded low in battle? 210
 Then why hark to song on the field?
 My course was not feeble in strife;
 But behind me were helpless weaklings;
 Foemen fled from my sword in peace.
 In Claonrath of woods, below Dubhra, 215
 Let Hidalla the harp's voice raise,
 With the maid from the wood-crowned hill
 To look on the gold of thy locks.
 Leave Lubar of echoing wold;
 This the abode is of men renowned." 220

"King of Erin," said Malthos the chief,
 "It is thine in battle to rule;
 Thou'rt fire to our eyes on the heath,
 On the hill that is dark above;
 Like a blast was thy rush o'er hosts; 225
 Thou hast thousands o'erwhelmed in blood;
 But returning, hero, with conquest,
 Who has heard exulting thy voice?
 The joy of the fierce is in death;
 Their memory dwells on each blow, 230
 Their sword struck to purpose in battle;
 Contention is nursed in their breasts,
 And for ever heard is their pride.
 Thy course has been, hero of Moma,
 Like a dark stream rushing through glens; 235

Death leaned hovering above thy steps.
 We all raised for action our swords ;
 Nor unvaliant were we behind thee ;
 Our foes were united and strong."

As the heroes swayed to his side, 240
 Cathmor beheld their anger rising,
 In fixed eyes that bit beneath lids ;
 In their swords half unsheathed to smite.
 There would then have been dreadful strife,
 Had not kindled the king's black wrath. 245
 As night-lightning he bared his sword
 In the brightness and light of pines.

" Ye children of pride," said the hero,
 " Put your souls under wise control ;
 Alone in the darkness of night, 250
 Why to harm should my wrath be moved ?
 With you shall my hand also strive ?
 This, men, is no season for strife.
 Leave the feast, like clouds from my side ;
 Arouse not the soul of the king." 255

They fell down from the hero's side,
 Like black piles of mist in the west,
 When morning is calm on the mount,
 And the sun between them looks forth,
 Shining brightly on the hill's rocks. 260
 Dark beyond are their shady slopes,
 To the marsh of dull reeds below.

The chiefs sat silent at the feast,
 With their look at times on the king,
 Whose great steps were on the hill's face, 265
 Be calming the ire of his soul.

The people lay stretched on the field ;
Partial sleep fell on slant Moi-Lena ;
From sweet Fonnar too came a voice,
From a tree that far distant rose. 270

His voice rose in praise of the king,
Larthonn's son from the wood of Lumon.
But his praise was not heard by Cathmor,
Who lay by a loud-sounding stream,
With the noise of night in his ear, 275
And the shrill whistling of his locks.

To his vision his brother came,
Half seen through his cloud's hollow side.
Joy was mixed with his mournful smile ;
To the chief rose a song from Caruill ; 280
Beneath clouds of dark skirts, a wind
Overtook him in night's great lap,
As he rose from the praise of cars
To the hall of the dead in light.

Half heard amid the sound of streams, 285
He poured forth a cold feeble strain :

“ Let comfort await on thy soul ;

The alarm has been heard on the field ;
The bard gave to purpose the song.

On wind is the path of my steps ; 290
My form is in the darksome hall,
Like the hateful lightning of storms
When it bursts aslant on the hill
And the night-blast rolls from the north.

A bard shall be found at thy grave,
When thou'rt laid aside in the dust.
The children of song praise the brave ;

Thy name is like sound from soft wind ;
 In the glen is a wail of grief ;
 On Lubar far off is a voice.

300

Sing louder, weak sprites of the hills,
 For the mighty dead were renowned.
 Far and lingering swelled the sound ;
 So heard is the wind among trees.

Soon helpless hast thou fallen, Cathmor ! ” 305
 Folded up in his own void form,
 On the sky’s great breast amid wind ;
 The oak quaked ’neath his tread on the mount,
 Hissing circled its head in gloom.

Cathmor, starting from his dark dream, 310
 Grasped the death-spear of chiefs in his hand ;
 His eye scanned the hill’s sloping side ;
 He saw but the night-storm’s black skirt.

“ My own brother’s voice it has been ;
 Now, even dim, his form is not seen ; 315
 Without track is your path in the glen,
 Ye who walk under gloom of night.
 Often like the sky’s beam of light
 Is your leaping seen on the mount,
 Escaping alone on the wind

320

At the motion of our slow steps.

From heroes, ye feeble, depart ;
 For wisdom or might is not yours ;
 As bad as yourselves is your joy,

Like a darkling vision in sleep, 325
 Or thoughts, under wings that are bare,
 That are floated across the breast.
 Is Cathmor so early to fall,

Pale, dark-laid in the narrow house,
Where morn shall not rise from the waves, 330
With her eyes half opened and dull ?
From my presence, thou worthless ghost ;
The war of kings to me belongs ;
From my presence each thought but strife.
Like eagle of hills from the mount, 335
Let me stalk abroad on the field,
To catch no faint blaze of renown.
In the lonely glen of slow streams
The weak soul remains under gloom ;
The seasons and years shall revolve ; 340
He shall ever remain obscure ;
In a blast from clouds shall come death,
His grey head laying low in dust ;
His ghost shall haunt the gloom of rocks,
Around the swamp circling and floating ; 345
His way will not be on high hills,
Nor in glens where the wind is strong.
Not so wilt thou, Cathmor, go down ;
Thou'rt no worthless boy on the field,
Marking the retreats of the deer 350
On the loudly-sounding cold hills.
I struck out in the midst of kings ;
My joy is in the fields of ghosts,
Where the hosts are broken in strife,
Like a rising wind on the sea." 355

"Twas thus spoke Alnecma the brave ;
The soul of the chief burned for war.
His might was like a flaming fire,
Brightening for strife in his breast ;

Graceful on the field were his steps. 360
 From the east came the rays of morning ;
 Grey gathered the men on the slope,
 Defiling and swaying in light.
 He joyed like a sprite of the sky
 When he stretches his steps on ocean 365
 And beholds the waves in repose,
 When the wind from the north is low ;
 But the waves he shall soon arouse,
 Driving them on the sounding shore.

On the rushy bank of a stream 370
 Slept the daughter of Lumon's chief ;
 From her head dropped her helm on earth ;
 In her own far land was her dream.
 The morning was there upon fields ;
 Hoary streams descended from cliffs ; 375
 While the breezes, umbered and weak,
 Fell dark on the crested waves.
 There was bustling then for the chase,
 Then hurried the chiefs from the hall ;
 More tall than the rest on the slope 380
 Was he of Atha's winding streams,
 With his eye full bent on his love,
 Suil-malla of the brightest locks.
 Though tall on the hill, from his steps
 She haughtily turned her face 385
 And tightened the string of her bow.

The vain dream of the maid was such
 When Atha came up to her side ;
 He saw her cheek of fairest tinge,
 'Midst the waving of her curled locks. 390

He knew the maiden from far Lumon.
But what could the warrior do ?
The sigh arose, and the tears fell ;
Prompt he turned away his great steps.
This no time is, hero, for thee 395
To stir thy soul with secret strife ;
Battle is pouring from the heath,
Like dark streams from a stormy hill.

He struck the shield's alarming boss,
Wherein dwelt the stern voice of battles. 400
Round the chief moved Erin, with sound
Like the dun mountain-eagle's wing.
From sweet slumber started the maiden ;
Her bright locks round her face fell slow ;
She raised her helm from the hill's brow, 405
But trembled in anguish the while.
Why in Erin know of the maiden,
Daughter of the fair, green-boughed isle ?
She remembered the sires of kings,
And her spirit struggled with pride. 410
Her light steps were behind the hills,
At the blue streams of greens on the plain—
Where deer could be seen in the glen,
The moment ere battle drew near.
Thither at times Cathmor's voice 415
Was borne to the ear of Suil-malla ;
Her spirit was clouded and sad ;
She poured her cold words on the wind.
" A sweet vision has from me gone ;
Seared and sad it has left my soul ; 420
There's no sound of chase on the mount ;

I am hid in the skirt of battle.
 I am looking down from my cloud ;
 No brightness shines on my steps ;
 I am seeing my hero fall ; 425
 For the king of great shields is rising—
 He who victory gains in danger,
 Selma's hero of spears and strokes.
 Ghost of Connor, who left us in gloom
 Are thy steps abroad on the wind ? 430
 Wilt thou come at times to us down,
 To a land of storms that are fierce ?
 Mighty sire of mournful Suil-malla,
 Thou wilt surely thyself come, chief ;
 I've heard thy voice in the night's blast, 435
 When rising towards Erin of shields,
 Fair isle of a hundred bright streams.
 The ghosts of our sires come in words
 To a soul that darkens with grief,
 When they see all lonely in woe 440
 The race of children whom mists shroud.
 Call me to thyself, mighty father,
 When Cathmor lies mangled on earth ;
 For then will Suil-malla be helpless
 And lonely, in grief for her hero. 445

T I G H M O R A.

D U A N V.

THOU that dwellest among the shields
That are high in the dusky hall,
From thy resting-place, harp, come down,
And softly let me hear thy voice.
Son of Alpin, strike thou the strings ; 5
Rouse his soul in the mighty bard ;
Lora's murmurs have from me borne
The assemblage of tales that were.
Standing amid the clouds of years ;
Few their openings, and dim the past ; 10
When the insight comes that would shape them,
It but faintly perceives the time.
Let me hear thee, thou harp from Selma ;
My spirit to song shall return,
Like a breeze of wind that is slow, 15
By the sun raised in quiet glens,
The abiding-place of dull mist. :
Before me bright-shining is Lubar,

As, winding, it pours through the glen ;
 On each side, on hills that are lofty, 20
 Is the appearance of tall kings ;
 While the people close round them throng,
 Moving up at their leaders' voice—
 As if spoke from the clouds their sires,
 Leaving the cold wind of the hills. 25
 They in form were like rocks above,
 With dark heads under troubled trees,
 As around swam the mist and storm.
 High on the ascent is a stream
 That scatters its foam on the wind. 30

At the king of Atha's high words,
 Erin poured on the field unceasing,
 Like the terrible sound of lightning ;
 Strongly flanked they went down to Lubar,
 Foldath stepped before them anew. 35
 The king left the field for the mount ;
 'Neath the boughs of an oak he sat ;
 Streamlets wandered down by his side.
 He raised the bright weapon of fate,
 The dread spear of kings in his hand ; 40
 A splendour it was to his people
 Amid the fierce conflicts of battle.
 Near him stood the maiden of chiefs,
 The daughter of blue-shielded Connor,
 Bright leaning to a rock, but faint ; 45
 The strife was no pleasure to her ;
 Her gentle soul was not for blood.
 Green valleys are spread far away,
 At the base of hills of clear streams—

On which the sun in silence shines, 50
 While the deer come down from the heights ;
 Upon these were the maiden's eyes,
 Amid thoughts that rose in her breast.

Fionngal on the summit beheld
 The strong son of Borbar, brave Dubhail ; 55
 He saw Erin densely approaching
 'Neath the wings of the hills in shade.
 He struck the boss, signal of battle,
 Warning his great host not to yield,
 When before it he sent his chiefs, 60
 To the field whence glory would rise.
 Many were the spears in the sun ;
 The sound of shields echoed around.
 No cowardice crept like a cloud
 Amongst the wroth gathering host. 65
 By their side was the king himself,
 In great strength from Selma beyond.
 Gladness brightened around the hero ;
 His calm voice was heard with delight.

“ Like the rush of wind on the waves, 70
 Echoing Selma's race went down ;
 Like a mountain-torrent were they,
 Whose fierce raging could not be stayed.
 From this same my fame shall proceed
 To send forth my name from the land ; 75
 I was not a flash in the rear ;
 Then after me close were your steps.
 I was not an unreal form,
 Darkening frightfully in your sight ;
 My voice was not thunder to heroes ; 80

Nor was death sent forth from mine eyes.
 When came the vain children of pride,
 They even fell not under mine eye,
 Forgotten in the hall of harps,
 Like dark mist from the mount subsiding. 85
 A young meteor with you goes forth ;
 But few have his steps been in war,
 But few ; yet the hero is brave.
 Keep the black-haired youth out of straits ;
 Bring Fillan again back with joy ; 90
 He alone shall make war hereafter.
 In form like his sires of great deeds,
 His soul is like lightning 'mid fame.
 Great son of Morni of great cars,
 Let thy steps be about the youth, 95
 Thy cry with strong voice in his ear
 In the onset and cloud of battle.
 Not unknown is the hero's use
 In the breaking of shields in strife."

Directly the king stretched his step 100
 To the high rock of Cormul's moss ;
 There struck sunbeams from time to time
 His blue shield of bosses and pomp.
 When slow moved the great king of chiefs,
 His eye was turned fiercely aside, 105
 Embracing the march of the men.
 Half hoar were his locks in the wind,
 Round his manly face under shade,
 Till it brightened up with wild joy ;
 I darkening after him stepped. 110
 At length Gall, the hero, arrived,

With his spotted shield on a thong ;
 He thus spoke as he hurried down :
 "Son of Fionngal, raise up the shield,
 Raise it, hero, high on my side ; 115
 Foes will think my spear is of use,
 When they see it shine in my hand.
 Should I, hero, fall on the hill,
 Hide, Ossian, my grave on the field ;
 This hand shall not carry the steel. 120
 Let my praise be not feebly-heard ;
 Let not the sweet fair of me hear,
 To redder 'mid her graceful locks.
 Fillan, 'neath the eyes of the king,
 Let's forget not the strife of blows ; 125
 Why should heroes come from the wood
 To succour the field in its need ?"
 He leaped into the mass of people,
 At his side rang the spotted shield.
 My voice cheered the chief of great deeds 130
 On his way to the strife of heroes :
 "Why should Morni's son fall in dust,
 Nor his fame be sounded in Erin ?
 The actions of heroes are lost,
 Forgotten, unwitting to rise ; 135
 Their way is on fields without storms ;
 Even faintly their voice is not heard."
 Rejoicing in the hero's steps,
 I went to the rock of the king
 Where he sat, with his straying locks 140
 In the wind of grey hills and woods.
 Like black cliffs the people advanced

Towards each other by flowing Lubar ;
 Like a slim mountain-cloud was Foldath ;
 Youthful Fillan brightened from gloom ; 145
 Each man, with his spear in the stream,
 Raised his voice for the dreadful strife.
 Gall struck echoing Selma's boss ;
 The hosts closed in trial of battle,
 As two torrents pour from the heights, 150
 Two streams from the uplands with sound,
 From two frowning rocks of the steep,
 Commingling their white foam below ;
 There steel was bright flashing on steel.
 See the son of fame on the hill, 155
 Cutting down the people's great strength !
 Death is on the wind round the chief ;
 Completely defeated are heroes
 Round the course of Fillan in battle.
 At two rocks above under blows 160
 Was Rathmor, the shield of his people ;
 Two oaks under wind from the waves
 Their branches swung around his steel.
 There dimly he opened his eyes,
 Slowly turning towards his friends, 165
 Awaiting in silence for Fillan.
 The king saw the desperate strife,
 While his soul without fear was rising.
 As with sound falls the stone of Loda
 From the edge of a high-ridged hill 170
 When a spectre heaves up the land,
 Rothmar of hard shields fell to earth.
 Close by him were thy footsteps, Cuilmin ;

The youth of fresh locks came in tears,
And behind cut the wind with strokes,
Ere he mixed in the gleam of swords
With Fillan of triumphs not few.

175

He put the bow under smooth string,
With Rothmar of a hundred streams ;
Their mark was the deer on the mount,
When the sunbeams leaped o'er the hill.

180

Why, son of Cul-aluinn the gentle,
Why, Cuilmin, approach that strong light ?
A firebeam he that burns all round.

Flee quickly, thou son of Cul-aluinn ;
Your fathers could not be compared
In the strife of blows on the field.

185

Cuilmin's mother is in the hall,
With eye on the blue face of streams ;
A fierce wind that rose from the sea
Blows darkly and whirling around
The spectre, the form of her son ;
In their place is the howling of dogs,
In the hall his blood-covered shield.

190

“Hast thou fallen, thou great one of might, 195
In the battles of loss in Erin ?”

As a hind by a secret arrow
Is laid stretched beside her own streams,
Where the hunter sees her stiff limbs,
And recalls her steps to his mind,
Even so stretched was Cul-aluinn's son
On the hill 'neath the hero's eye,
With the tips of his locks in a rill,
While the blood rushed over his shield ;

200

His hand was on his harmless sword, 205
 The steel that failed the chief in danger.
 "Thou hast fallen," said Fillan, in grief,
 "Ere thy praise has been heard aright.
 Thy sire with a host sent thee warring,
 In the opinion to hear anew 210
 Thy actions proclaimed in his ear.

He is hoar beside his own streams,
 With his eye on Moi-Lena of storms ;
 But thou'l never, hero, return,
 Bearing plunder from thy first foes." 215

Fillan rolled the flight over Erin,
 Pursuing o'er loud-sounding fields.
 But in chief on chief Morbheinn fell
 Under Foldath's dark senseless wrath.
 Far off on the side of the hill, 220
 With more than a third of the conflict,
 Stood Dearmúd, the noble, in gloom ;
 The race of Selma poured around.
 With the sword Foldath broke his shield ;
 His host slowly fled on the hill. 225

The foe then exultingly said,
 "They have fled, and my fame begins.
 Malthos, join Cathmor of great deeds ;
 Set a watch on ocean's great waves ;
 The strong foe shall fall on the land ; 230
 His grave shall be at the hill's lake ;
 No death-song for him shall be raised ;
 His ghost shall be feeble and sad
 In mist round the mead's reedy marsh."
 Malthos overheard their dark thoughts 235

With a calm and downcast red eye ;
 Well he knew the pride of the chief ;
 He eyed the king on the high hill ;
 He turned, in his darkening of breast,
 And rushed with his sword into battle.

240

In the dark narrow glen of Cona,
 Two trees are bent over the stream ;
 There, silent and in sorrow, stood
 The son of Duthno of famed battles,
 With blood pouring down at his side,
 And broken cleft shield on the ground ;
 His great spear stood against a rock.
 Why, Dearmúd, so doleful thy grief ?

245

“ I am hearing the dread sound of conflict ;
 My friends are alone on the plain ;
 My steps are slow on the great wold ;
 My cleft shield is bootless in strife.
 Shall he be victorious always ?
 Dearmúd in the grave shall have fame.
 A while before darkness prevails,
 I shall call upon thee to battle,
 And encounter the pride of Foldath.”

250

With grim pleasure he grasped the spear,
 Morni’s son, the chief, by his side.

“ Son of Duthno, restrain thy speed ;
 Thy steps are fearless amid blood ;
 Thy shield’s massy boss is not thine ;
 Why unarmed should the hero fall ? ”
 “ Son of Morni, give me thy shield ;
 It has often gone down to battle ;
 I shall check his course on the hill.

255

260

265

Son of Morn', see a stone on the plain—
 A stone that uprears its grey head
 Through the grass that sounds in the wind ;
 That grave holds a chief of my race ; 270
 There fold thou me up in the night."

He went slowly along the hill ;
 He saw under madness the field
 Whence rose the dreadful gleam of battle,
 As in fury it round him broke. 275
 Like a fire at night in a glen,
 That rises far off in the heath,
 Now concealing its head in smoke,
 Again raising its wild red stream,
 As rises or lowers the wind ; 280
 It was so battle met the eye
 Of Dearmúd of the ample shield.
 Before his host were Foldath's great steps,
 Like a ship on the ridge of wayes
 When she launches out 'twixt two isles, 285
 Going and returning on ocean
 'Mid tossings by a rough cold moon.

Dearmúd saw his movements in wrath ;
 He put forth to its full his strength ;
 But his steps on the mountain failed ; 290
 Tears fell from the hero of feasts ;
 Then he sounded his father's horn ;
 Three times did he strike his great shield ;
 Three times call the head of the people.
 The chief, Foldath, heard him on high, 295
 Amid the shouts and roar of battle.
 Foldath saw the hero with joy,

And to purpose raised up his spear,
Which was bathed to its half in blood.

Like a rock, with red slanting rills 300

Pouring down its sides in a storm,
So was poured forth the hero's blood,
The dark chief of men under arms.

On either side the people swayed
From the combat of the two kings, 305

Who alike raised up their two spears.

But quickly, in the steel of Selma,
From the rear of the host came Fillan.

Black Foldath retreated three steps
From the beam that dazzled his eyes, 310

As he came like lightning from clouds,
To the aid of a wounded chief ;
He stood growing up in his pride,
Calling all to war with his steel.

As when meet upon strong broad wings 315

Two eagles with force in the wind,

Contending upon all their feathers,
The two heroes fast moved to battle.

By turns were the steps of the kings

Onward to the strife from two hills ; 320

Darkening, battle was going down

On their swords with the force of conquest.

The joy of heroes was in thy breast,

Cathmor, on the brow of the hill—

The joy in secret ever felt 325

When dangers arise to the brave.

He bent not his sight on the field,

For his eye was looking above

On the resolute king of Selma.

He beheld his movements on Mora
In the pomp of his splendid arms.

Foldath slowly fell on his shield,
Struck to earth by the spear of Fillan.
Putting hundreds to flight in battle,
The young man regarded him not.

Death's hundred voices to him came :
"Son of Fionngal, slowly advance.
Dost thou see not yon stately form,
The dark sign of death on the hill ?
Provoke not anew Erin's king,
Son of Clatho of the blue eyes."

When Malthos saw Foldath on earth,
He darkened concerning the chief ;
While malice left his spirit quite,
Like a rock of the moorland waste
On which pours the dark stream of rains,
When the sluggish mist settles down
About trees that wither apace,
In the dark-grey blasts of the hills.

He communed with the dying chief,
Inquiring concerning his grave :
"Shall thy grey stone be raised in Ullin
Or in Moma of many woods,
Where in secret shall look the light
On hilly Dalriabhach's blue stream ?
The slow steps of the maid are there,
Thy bright daughter, the blue-eyed Lena."

"Hast thou her in remembrance, chief ?
But I have no son to succeed me ;

330

335

340

345

350

355

No youth to battle on the hill, 360
 And so to avenge me, warrior.
 But, Malthos, I have been avenged ;
 For peaceful I have not been, hero ;
 On the hill raise tombs to my slain,
 Round the narrow uncheerful house. 365
 I shall often swiftly descend
 From the blast to my foemen's graves,
 When I see them spreading on high
 Their long grass that waves in the wind."

His soul away hastened with sound 370
 To the small glen by Moma's hills ;
 In a vision he came all pale
 To bright Lena of modest talk,
 As, returned from chasing the deer,
 She slept by the stream of Dalruadh. 375
 Her smooth bow was beside the maid,
 Without string, while the soft breeze swam
 Over her white bosom and locks.
 Thus arrayed in the charms of youth,
 The rare maid of chiefs lay on earth. 380
 Darkly bending from the hill's brow
 Came Foldath, all pale and in gore ;
 She saw him at times on a cloud,
 He at times hid himself in mist.
 Knowing the great hero was low, 385
 She gave vent to a gush of tears.
 Unto her the radiance was bright
 From his soul when greatest its storm.
 But at last thou art left behind,
 Beaming Lena of the blue eyes. 390

Large-winged from Lubar's sounding falls,
Bolga's host fled behind the hills ;
Fillan, pressing close on their steps,
Spread the gloom of death on the heath.
In his son was Fionngal's delight. 3
Cathmor moved with joy in blue shields.

Forsake, Clatho of the blue eyes,
Forsake thou the hall of sweet strings ;
See that radiance that brightly shines ;
The people wither round his steps. 400
Look on him no longer, 'tis dark ;
Lightly from the harp of small waist
Let the maiden of chiefs strike sounds ;
'Tis no hunter comes from the waste,
From dews on the mountain of roes ; 405
He'll not bend a bow in the wind,
Nor drop a grey shaft on the plain.

Far down in the redness of battle,
See the conflict thick by his side ;
As he moves in the whirl of strife, 410
The death of thousands waits his sword.
Fillan is like a spirit of heaven
That comes strong from the skirts of storms ;
The ocean frets under his steps
As he bounds from wave unto wave ; 415
His pathway behind him is blazing ;
The islands shake their hundred heads,
'Midst ocean rising wildly round.

Forsake, Clatho of the blue eyes,
Forsake thou the hall of sweet strings. 420

TIGHMORA.

DUAN VI.

“CATHMOR is rising on the hill ;
Shall Fionngal seize the sword of Luno ?
What then would become of thy fame,
Son of white-bosomed blue-eyed Clatho ?
From me turn not away thine eyes,
Thou daughter of brave Innistore ;
I will not quench thy brightness, sunbeam,
That shines on my spirit this night.
Let the branching wood rise on Mora—
Between me and the conflict rise.
Why the strife on the plain should I see,
Lest the dark-haired hero should fall ?
In thy minstrelsy, Caruill, pour
A high-sounding strain from the harp.
The sweet voice of a rock is here,
Where a grey stream rolls from the waste.
Raise, father of Oscar, thy spear ;
Shield the youth in arms on the field ;

Conceal thy steps the while from Fillan,
Lest he know his steel is distrusted. 20

No cloud shall rise from me, my son ;
Thy fire shall be, hero, unchecked."

The chief was concealed by a rock
'Mid the cadence of song from Caruill ;

I brightened with no scanty joy, 25
With Tighmora's spear in my hand.

I saw on the plain of Moi-Lena
The fierce turmoil of battle rising ;
Slowly closed the conflict of death ;
Hosts were broken 'neath gleaming swords. 30

Fillan was like fire from the sky ;
His great steps were from wing to wing ;
Battle melted before the hero,
As he folded the field in gloom.

Now is moving down to the strife 35
Great Cathmor, the king, in his arms ;
An eagle's wing darkly depends
Round his burnished helmet of steel.
Without care were his stately steps,

As if Erin's chase were in hand. 40
He at times raised aloud his voice ;

Erin in distress gathered round ;
Wondering at their flight and fear,

Their souls settled down like a stream ;
The chief was like the rays of morning, 45

Rising on a mountain of ghosts ;
The wayfarer wending alone

Looks down from the side of his face
On the slope of cold forms in gloom.

Quickly from Moi-Lena's grey rock 50
 Came Suil-malla of graceful steps ;
 An oak caught the spear from her hand ;
 Half stooping she yielded the steel ;
 While her eyes bent on Erin's king
 From her wandering rising locks. 55

No strife this of friends on the field ;
 No weak actors are on the plain,
 As if youthful heroes from Lumon
 Were meeting under Connor's eyes.

Like Runo's rock darkening above, 60
 As it takes in their flight the clouds,
 And towers in the gloom of its brow
 O'er the moors of grey rocks and streams ;
 So, greatest, was Cathmor of Atha
 When the brave were gathering round. 65

Like squalls scudding o'er the ocean,
 Each driving before it a wave,
 Even so were his words to his people,
 As he ranged them round on the hill.
 Nor silent was Fillan above ; 70

His words were in his sounding shield ;
 The chief was on the hill like an eagle,
 With each feather on its breast ruffled,
 As it calls the winds to its rock,
 When it sees before it the fawns 75

On the dark rushy plain of Luthar.

The high kings of the brave, in conflict
 Together rushed, from wing to wing
 Kindling fire in their people's breasts.
 Forward on his spear flew Ossian ; 80

Trees and rocks successively rose
 Between him and the field of battle.
 But I heard the sharp ring of steel
 'Midst my sounding mail on the mount.
 When I rose in light on the hill, 85
 I saw that the people were yielding,
 That their steps at the time were backward;
 Their eyes, rolling, rose to their brows.
 Strongly met in the rage of battle
 The two kings of blue-shielded heroes; 90
 Tall and dark in the midst of darts
 Was seen the fierce strife of the chiefs.
 I rushed wildly up towards Fillan,
 Grief swelling, burning in my breast.

I came; but the king did not flee; 95
 Nor towards me came he with strife.
 Like a rock of ice in the heath,
 Cold and stern was the hero's might.
 Upwards in silence were our steps
 On both sides of a raging stream. 100
 Frowning, on each other we turned,
 And raised the hard points of our spears;
 We raised our spears, but twilight fell;
 The hill under darkness was still,
 Save that heard were the steps of chiefs, 105
 Sounding on the slope as they left.

I arrived at the lonely place
 Where Fillan the battle had fought;
 Word nor sound was not on the field;
 A broken shield and hero's helmet
 Were on earth, and a useless dart. 110

Oh where is Fillan of the shield ?
 Where the youthful chieftain from Morbheinn ?
 He heard, leaning against a rock
 That bent over the hill's great stream-- 115
 He heard, although feeble and dark ;
 I then saw before me the hero.
 " Why thus stands in a pall of darkness
 The son of Selma, compassed by woods ?
 Dazzling has been thy course, my brother, 120
 On the grey field of mighty heroes.
 Prolonged has the conflict been, chief ;
 Fionngal's horn seeks thee on the hill ;
 Thither go to thy father's clouds,
 To his feast on the mountain's brow. 125
 The king shall sit in evening's mist,
 Listening to the harp's powerful voice
 From sweet Caruill of sounding strains ;
 Give joy to the agèd, great chief ;
 Man that breakest the shields, depart." 130
 " Shall joy come to the feeble, chief ?
 My shield is not, Ossian, beside me ;
 It is broken and strewed on the hill ;
 The plume of the dun bird of heaven
 Has been crushed on my helm in battle. 135
 When the foe takes to headlong flight,
 The fathers of heroes have joy ;
 But their sighs shall heavily rise
 When the valiant fail on the field.
 The king shall not be seen by Fillan ;
 Why should he be laden with grief ?" 140
 " Son of Clatho of bluest eyes,

Youthful Fillan, awake not my breast.
 Wast thou not a fire without smoke ?
 Shall the chief not anew have joy ? 145
 I cannot attain to thy fame ;
 Like the sun to my path the hero ;
 He looks on my steps with delight,
 No shadow e'er dwells on his face.

Up, Fillan, to Mora of towers, 150
 For the banquet is spread in mist.”

“ Restore to me, Ossian, my shield,
 And plumes that are dark in the wind ;
 Place them, chief, by the side of Fillan ;
 So he'll lose but a part of his fame. 155
 Mighty Ossian, faintness comes o'er me ;
 Put me thus all marred in the cave.
 On the mount raise o'er me no stone,
 Lest inquiry be made for Fillan.

I have fallen in my first battle, 160
 Without fame or success in arms.
 Let thy voice alone be, warrior,
 A solace to my parting soul ;
 For why should the bard ever speak
 Of the young beam from gentle Clatho ? ” 165

“ Is thy soul on the whirling wind,
 Young Fillan, thou breaker of shields ?
 May happiness follow thee, hero,
 Through the ample folds of dark clouds !
 The semblance of thy great sires, Fillan, 170
 Their phantoms bend over their race ;
 I discern their fire on the heath,
 Blue-spreading in the mist of storms

Round Mora in the whirling wind.
 May happiness there meet my brother! 175
 Thou hast left the brave under grief;
 For the foe is around the agèd;
 Fame forsakes his dwelling in mist;
 For thou art alone on the hill,
 King of the hoar locks from Selma." 180

I placed him in the hollow rock
 By the sound of great streams at night;
 A red star looked down from the hill,
 But showed not the young man in light;
 The wind slowly lifted his locks. 185
 I was listening, but heard no sound,
 For the hero was pale in death.
 Like lightning on a dark-brown cloud,
 Mournful thoughts arose in my breast;
 My eyes were like fire in my head; 190
 My steps were not slow on the heath,
 'Mid the ringing of my hard mail.
 The king of Erin and I shall meet;
 We shall meet in the crowd of hundreds.
 For why should this cloud escape, 195
 That has quenched the beam of the sky?
 Set ablaze the lightnings of hills,
 Set them blazing up, my forefathers,
 Thus giving to my footsteps light—
 I shall waste the foe in my wrath. 200
 But should I, also, not return,
 The king shall be left without son;
 His grey locks are among his foes;
 His arm, that was powerful, is weak;

His fame is subsiding in Erin. 205
 Let me never behold the hero
 In grief on the last of his fields.
 But how can I go to the king ?
 Will he not inquire for his son ?
 " Why brought'st thou not Fillan from strife ? " 211
 Below, Ossian will meet the foe ;
 He goes from the sight of his friends.
 High Erin of the greenest glens,
 Pleasant is thy sound to my ears.
 I am quick on thy host with sword, 215
 To shun the king's eyes under frown.
 But high above I hear the king,
 On Mora of forests in mist ;
 He calls his two sons from the strife.
 I am coming downcast with grief ; 220
 I'm coming like a mountain-eagle
 That has met the hill's fire at night ;
 From the desert it soars aloft
 With its wings black-scorched in the light.
 Far off, around the king on Mora, 225
 Morbheinn broken poured from the field.
 They turned their eyes from the great chief ;
 While each of them drew to his side,
 And looked with chagrin from his spear.
 Silent in their midst stood the king, 230
 With thoughts struggling up in his breast,
 Like billows on a moorland lake,
 Each one of them hoar under foam.
 He looked down, but he saw no son
 Coming with bright spear at command. 235

His sighs without delay arose ;
 Under silence he hid his grief.
 I stood apart beneath an oak ;
 But no word from me slowly rose.

What could I have said at the time,
 To Fionngal, the brave, in his grief ?

But his word now was loudly raised ;
 The people swayed back from his voice :

“ Where is Selma’s son, the great chief,
 He who moved in the wings of battle ? ”

I see not his step on the hill,
 Returning from the path of glory,
 Amid the great host of my people.

Has the young hart fallen on the mount—
 He of proudest step on the hill ? ”

He has fallen ; ye silent remain ;
 Soon dispersed were the shields of war.

Fit ye on me my mail of steel,
 And the son of swarthy brown Lunn.

I am stirring on the high hill ;
 To-morrow I shall strive with heroes.”

There was high on Gormull a tree
 That blazed before the sounding wind ;
 On its side a grey patch of mist
 Was gracefully spreading around.

There in anger were the king’s steps,
 Distant from the skirt of his host.

His abode was aye on the field,
 When fierce battle blazed round his breast.

His great shield was high on two spears,
 A sad token of dismal death ; ”

240

245

250

255

260

265

That same shield was struck by the king
 On the night preceding the conflict ;
 By which it was known to the brave
 When to move to the deadly strife ; 270
 But he raised not idly his shield,
 Till the conflict surged to his side.
 His steps were loud-sounding on high,
 While he shone in the blazing tree—
 Dreadful as the form of a ghost 275
 Beneath the black cold clouds of night ;
 When he plays 'neath a shroud of gloom
 Silly antics in the dim light,
 And takes him to the car of winds
 On the roused wild waste of great ocean. 280
 Uncalmed from the fierce storm of battle
 Was Erin of great chiefs beyond ;
 On the plain were their moon-cast shadows ;
 Low murmurs succeeded the strife.
 All alone were the steps of Cathmor 285
 Forward and backward on the hill ;
 He was pressing in all his arms
 On Morbheinn of heroes in flight.
 And now he arrived at the cave
 Where reposed in the night young Fillan ; 290
 One tree was beside the great stream
 That glittering fell from a rock.
 There, under the moon, to be seen
 Was the cleft shield of Clatho's son,
 And close by it, stretched on the grass, 295
 The rough foot of the strong dog Bran.
 He saw not the chief upon Mora,

And to meet him went on the wind ;
He supposed the hunter had closed
His blue eyes in a pall of sleep.

300

A gust could not stir on the heath
Unknown to the fleet dog of roes.

Cathmor saw the dog of white breast ;
He saw the broken shield beyond ;
Then sadness returned to his soul ;
His thoughts darkly sorrowing rose
For the fall of chiefs on the field.

305

“ Men shall come like a flowing stream ;
A weak race shall after us come ;
But a portion shall mark the hill,
Passing o'er it with their great deeds ;
To their searching the hills will answer
Through the vanishing dark-brown years ;
A blue stream shall wind round their fame ;
Of them be the hero from Atha,
When his head is laid on the earth.

310

May the voices of time to come
Meet Cathmor in a gentle wind,
When he leaps upon mirky blasts,
On the darkly-streaked skirts of storms.”

315

320

Erin gathered around the king,
To hear report of his great power ;
Every face leaned forward with joy,
In the light from great burning trees.

325

All that was dreadful left the hill ;
Before the host Lubar was winding.
Cathmor was the fire from the sky
That shed brightness on all his friends ;

Amidst them the king was revered,
While their souls in joyfulness vied.

330

His soul felt no terror nor joy ;

The chief was no stranger to war.

“ For what cause is the king in grief ? ”
Said Malthos of the wildest eye.

“ Is the foe at Lubar of hills ? ”

335

Have they who again shall upraise
Anew the long spear unto death ?

Not so peaceful as thyself, chief,
Was thy father, Borbar of feasts,

Who to purpose could raise the spear.

340

His wrath like a fire always burned ;

Long ago his joy was in foes

That fell dead in the strife with shields.

Three days had the warrior feast

From the chief of graceful grey locks,

345

When Calmar was slain on the hill,

He who aided Ullin from Lara,

Sweet country of heroes and streams.

Often did he feel with his hand

The steel’s point which had dealt the wound

That in battle laid low his foe ;

351

He often felt it with his hand,

For the warrior’s eyes were blind.

A sun to his friends was the king ;

A powerful breeze to their green boughs ;

355

There was joy in the hall of harps ;

His delight was in Bolga’s brave.

His name remains to-day in Atha,

Like sad memory on vain ghosts,

Frightful when they came and remained ; 360
 But from us they blew the wild storms.

Let Erin's sweet voices arise
 To rejoice the soul of the king,
 Who resembled the light of heaven,
 Shining amid the gloom of battle, 365
 When he put to silence the brave.
 Fonnar from the grey rocks above,
 Pour wailing and praise in their turn—
 Pour them on victorious Erin,
 Till the steel settle under song." 370

" For me," replied Cathmor the brave,
 " Tune of harp or song shall not rise
 From Fonnar by Lubar of falls ;
 They were mighty who yonder lie ;
 Scare not thou their slow-moving ghosts. 375
 Far, Malthos, distant from me far,
 Let Erin be with praise and song ;
 'Tis not joy when the foe is cold,
 When the brave lift the spear no more.
 With morning our strength shall go forth ; 380
 Fionngal is in arms on the hill."

Like waves rolling back under wind,
 Erin rolled from beside the king.
 Dark-crowding on the field of night,
 The host raised a hum in the dark. 385
 'Neath a tree on the hill each bard
 Sat over beside his own harp ;
 They melodies raised without stint,
 Striking slow clear notes from the strings—
 Each one to some chief of renown. 390

Apart beside a flaming oak
 Suil-malla struck slowly the strings ;
 She struck from time to time the harp,
 While the wind circled round her locks.

Cathmor was in the darksome shade, 395
 With his head 'neath an agèd tree.

The oak flamed away from the chief ;
 He saw her, but she saw not him ;
 His soul was o'erflowing in secret,
 When he saw below her mild eye ; 400
 But the dangers of war are by thee,
 Son of Borbar of noble chiefs.

Among the strings, from time to time,
 She listened if her hero slept ;
 Her soul was in a moment roused 405
 In the gloom, her wish at the time
 Was to raise her own mournful strain.
 Hushed the field ; aside on their wings
 Fled the blasts and the storms of night.

The bards succumbed, and through the dusk
 A red lurid omen appeared 411

Beneath the pale gleam of weak ghosts.
 The sky lowered ; the forms of the dead
 Were among the gathering dull clouds.

Without thought of the fire gone out, 415
 Save embers, was Conmor's one daughter ;
 For thou wast alone her desire,
 Chief of Atha of handsome cars.

She pensively raised the sweet strain,
 And struck the bared strings of her harp. 420

“ Clungeal came, but found not the maiden.

'Oh where is the radiance bright?
Have ye, hunters from mossy caves,
Seen the blue-eyed love of chiefs beaming?
Are her steps on Lumon of grass,
About the forms whence start the roes?
Woe's me! her bow is in the hall
Wherein feasts were wont to be held.
Oh where is my soul's beam of light?'

“Leave me, love of Connor of heroes ; 430
I'll not hear thee upon the hill ;
My eyes are on the king of blows ;
His path is 'mid the wounds of action ;
To him wholly given is my heart
In my hundred dreams of the night. 435
Deep, dark, down in the midst of battle,
The great chief shall not see my plight.
Why, sun of Suil-malla of chiefs,
Why look'st thou not hope to me down ?
My abiding-place is in gloom ; 440
From behind mist over me floats ;
My ringlets are bending with dew.
Look on me from thy cloud, warrior,
Sun of Suil-malla of great chiefs.”

TIGHMORA.

DUAN VII.

FROM the lake in the wood of Lego
Rise at times the blue mists of waves,
When the doors of the night are closed
On the eagle-eyed sun of the sky.

Massy, around Lara of falls,
Roll black clouds of the deepest gloom ;
Like a grey shield through driving clouds,
Sailing past is the moon of night.

With these ghosts of old were arrayed
In close order amid the wind,
As they bounded from blast to blast
On the black face of stormy night.
On side-gusts to the tents of heroes
They propelled the mist of the sky,
That blue hall of the spectred dead,
Till the death-song rose from the harp.

A hum is on the plain of trees !
It is Conar, the king of Erin,

5

10

15

Thickly rolling the mist of ghosts
 On Fillan, by Lubar of falls,
 Where sadly he sits under grief.
 In the marsh-mist reclined the shade,
 Till together rolled by the blast ;
 But the fair form quickly returned ;
 He returned with downcast sad look,
 With mist-locks like the rushing storm. 25

This is dark !
 The host at the time was asleep
 In the dusky mantle of night.
 Above sank the fire of the king,
 Who reclined alone on his shield ;
 Sleep fell on the warrior's eyes ;
 To his ear came the voice of Fillan :
 "Is it sleep with the spouse of Clatho ?
 Does my father dwell in repose ?
 Am I thought of in robe of mist—
 Alone in the season of night ?" 35

"But wherefore art thou in my dream ?"
 Said Fionngal, uprising in haste.

"Forgotten by me is my son,
 Or his fire-course on heroes' fields ?
 Not so o'er the soul of the king
 Come the hard-fought deeds of the brave.
 No lightning are they that take flight
 In dark night without leaving tracks. 45
 In his sleep I remember Fillan ;
 My spirit is wrathfully rising."

The king quickly moved with his spear ;
 He struck the shield of sounding boss—

The shield that swung high in the night, 50
 Rousing tool to the strife of wounds.
 On the dusky slope of the hill
 Fled the troop of ghosts on the wind ;
 From the dark glen of many bends
 The wail of the dying arose. 55
 He a second time struck the shield ;
 War affected the people's dreams,
 In which the conflict with blue swords
 Was shining on the souls of heroes ;
 The chiefs were advancing to battle ; 60
 The people retreating ; brave deeds
 Were half veiled in the gleam of steel.
 When the sound a third time arose,
 Deer started from the caves of rocks ;
 Screams of birds were heard in the desert, 65
 Each one of them on its own blast.
 Albin's conquering race half rose ;
 They raised aloft every blue spear ;
 But quiet returned to the host ;
 It was the shield of showery Morbheinn. 70
 Sleep returned to the people's eyes ;
 For heavy and dark was the glen.
 No sleep at the time was for thee,
 Blue-eyed daughter of noble Conmor.
 Suil-malla overheard the sound ; 75
 Distressed, she arose in the night ;
 Her steps were to Atha's brave king,
 Whose stern soul no danger could rouse.
 She stood pensive, with downcast eyes ;
 The heavens were burning with stars. 80

By her heard was the bossy shield.
 She advanced—then suddenly stopped ;
 She raised her voice—but it sank down ;
 She beheld him in his hard steel,
 Shining against the burning stars ; 85
 She saw him in his heavy locks
 That rose on the wind of the sky.
 She in fear turned away her steps :
 “ Why wake Erin’s king of the Bolgs ?
 No dream of his slumbers art thou, 90
 Daughter of the warlike green isle.”

But more dreadfully woke the sound ;
 From the maid her helmet fell down ;
 It sounded on the rock of streams.
 Awaking from the dreams of night, 95
 Cathmor moved beneath his own tree ;
 He saw the most gentle of maidens
 On the rock by Lubar of hills ;
 A red star was glimmering down
 On her heavy wandering locks. 100

“ Who to Cathmor comes through the night,
 In the darksome time of his dreams ?
 Hast thou knowledge of strife’s hard blows ?
 Who art thou, son of murky skies ?
 Wilt thou stand thus before the king, 105
 Slender shade from the time of old ?
 Or art thou from the clouds a voice
 Fraught with danger to brave old Erin ? ”

“ No walker of darkness am I,
 Nor am I a voice from murk clouds ; 110
 But my words are of ills to Erin.

Hast thou heard the high-sounding boss?
No ghost he, king of streamy Atha,
Who rolls forth that sound on the night."

"Let the hero roll forth his voice— 115

A strain of harps is the sound to Cathmor;
For delight, son of darksome skies,
In my spirit burns without gloom.

This is music to battling chiefs

In the night-time on stormy hills, 120

When kindle the souls of the brave—

Children who make danger their choice.

A weak race ever lives in fear,

In the valleys of gentle winds,

Where morning's mist leans on the hill 125

From the blue-winding streams of plains."

"No weaklings, high chief of the brave,

Were the sires from whom I have come;

Their home was the darkness of waves

In the far land, a warlike race. 130

But my feeling soul has no joy

In death's plaintive sound on the field.

He shall come who never succumbs;

Wake a bard of the gentlest words."

Like a rock with rills on its side,

In a waste of the lonely hills,

Cathmor, though no taciturn chief,

Stood in tears.

Like a breeze on his soul with grief

Came the gentle voice of the maid,

Waking thoughts of the mountain land,

Her sweet home by the streams of glens,

135

140

Ere he boldly came on a time
To the aid of fierce froward Conmor.

“ Daughter of the stranger in arms ” 145
(She had turned her head from the hero),
“ Though in steel, long under mine eye
Was the shoot of ocean’s green isle.
My soul is, to myself I said,
In the folds of a lowering storm. 150

Then why should this radiance shine,
Till in peace I return from the hill ?
Paled my face in thy presence, fair-hand,
When raising to my fear the king ?
Times of danger, maid of rich locks, 155
Are those of my soul—strife’s great hall—
When, swelling like a flooded stream,
I rush on the hard-smiting Galls.

“ In a rock’s creviced side on Lona,
By the eddies of winding streams, 160
Hoary, in the ringlets of age,
Is Claonmal, king of tuneful harps ;
Above him is a sounding oak,
And the movements of glossy roes.
In his ear is the sound of strife, 165
As he stoops in vindictive thought ;
There, Suil-malla, will be thy home,
Till the tumult of war subsides,
Till in flaming steel I return
From the dusky robe of the mount, 170
From the mist that gathers on Lona,
Round the dwelling-place of my love.”
A beam of light on the maiden fell ;

She brightened up before the king ;
 Towards Cathmor she turned her face, 175
 While her soft locks played in the wind.

“ High heaven’s eagle shall be torn
 From the great rushing winds of glens,
 When it sees before it the roebucks—
 The children of lone mountain-hinds— 180
 Ere hard-smiting Cathmor shall turn
 From the strife o’er which song shall rise.
 Let me see thee, chief of sharp steel,
 From this cloud of the deepest gloom,
 When the mist rises round my dwelling, 185
 Upon Lona of many streams.
 When thou’rt, hero, far from mine eye,
 Then strike thou the boss of loud sound ;
 To my sad soul let joy return,
 As alone I lean on a rock. 190
 If thou fall, I am left with strangers !
 Let thy voice then come from a cloud
 To the green island’s maiden, faint.”

“ Youthful bough from Lumon of grass,
 Why recline in the pelting storm ? 195
 Oft has Cathmor returned from battles
 That rolled darkly on the hill’s face ;
 Like hail to me are piercing spears,
 As they break on the dented shield.
 I would rise a light from the strife, 200
 Like night-fire from the rolling clouds.
 Return not, sunbeam, from the glen,
 When approaches the sound of arms,
 Lest the foe escape from my hand,

As they left the sires of the Bolgs. 205

“ But Sonnmor heard about Cluanfhear,
By Cormac of sharp swords that fell.

Three days mourned the king for the man
Who fell in the strife of the glens.

His fair spouse saw the hero’s grief, 210

Which moved her to go to the hill ;

She took up in secret her bow,

To go with the hero of shields ;

To the fair, darkness lay on Atha

When the hero went forth to war. 215

From the slope’s hundred streams by night

The race of Alneenia came down.

The king’s alarming shield was heard ;

Their spirits awoke for the strife ;

Their march was in the sound of arms 220

To Ullin, the country of trees.

Sonnmor, the head of daring chiefs,

From time to time sounded the shield.

“ But following after them, came

Suil-aluinn on the showery slope ; 225

On the upland she was a light,

As they poured upon the grey glens ;

Graceful were her steps on the field

When they climbed the faces of knolls ;

She dreaded the look of the king,

Who had left her in Atha of woods

When the sound of conflict arose

And they mingled together in strife ;

Sonnmor burned like the fire of heaven ;

Suil-aluinn of heroes came near 235

With her hair outspread on the wind,
 And her soul distressed for the king.
 He swayed strife round the love of heroes ;
 Under heaven's gloom fled the foe ;
 But Cluanfhear reclined without blood, 240
 Without blood on a small dark house.

“ Nor did Sonnmor of swords feel wroth ;
 For his day was darksome and dull.
 Suil-aluinn by her blue stream paced,
 With her eyes in a flood of tears ; 245
 While many were the looks and bland
 She cast on the silent great chief ;
 But she turned away her soft eyes
 From the backward warrior's look.
 Battle heaved like the rush of clouds ; 250
 Sorrow vanished from her great soul ;
 Beheld with delight were her steps,
 While her hand touched the tuneful harp.”

The king quickly moved in his steel ;
 He struck aloud the dented shield, 255
 That was high on an oak of storms,
 Beside Lubar of many falls.
 Seven bosses were on the shield,
 Seven words from the king to his people,
 Which were borne on the winds of heaven 260
 To the powerful tribes of the Bolgs.

On each boss was a star of night :
 Ceann-maghann of rays without haze ;
 Caol-dearrsa uprising from clouds ;
 Iul-oidhch' in a garment of mist ; 265
 Caoin-chathlinn on a rock is shining ;

Reul-dubhra on western blue waves
Is half hiding its light in rain.
Beur-theine, the hill's flashing eye,
Looks down from the wood on the height 270
On the slow-moving hunter's course,
Through the valleys of dripping gloom,
With spoils from the high-bounding roes.
Large in the centre of the shield
Is Tonn-theine, flaming without cloud, 275
The star that looked down through the night
Upon Lear-thonn of the great deep—
On Lear-thonn, leader of the Bolgs,
The first man who travelled on wind.
Broadly spread were the king's white sails 280
To Innis-fail of many streams.
Night rolled upon the face of ocean,
And its mist that was a black pall ;
The wind quickly changed in the sky ;
The ship bounded from wave to wave,— 285
When Tonn-theine of streamers arose
Mild-looking from the breaking clouds ;
Its guiding-fire brought joy to Lear-thonn,
As it shone on the stormy deep.
Under old renowned Cathmor's shield 290
Woke the voice that would waken bards ;
They poured dark from the sides of hills,
With a tuneful harp in each hand.
The king in great joy stood before them,
Like traveller at noon in a glen 295
When he hears afar o'er the plain
The sweet purling of mountain-rills—

Of rills that break forth in the desert
From the grey-sided rocks of roes.

“ Wherefore hear I the king’s high voice 300
At sleep-time in a night of showers ?
Has a ghost of the dead been seen
In thy vision, hovering pale ?
On a cloud is their cold abode
Waiting songs from Fonnair of feasts ? 305
Many are their steps on the plain,
Whereon their children lift the spear.
Or first shall our dirge rise for him
Who shall never more lift the spear—
Him from Moma of many woods,
Who was slain in the people’s glen ? ” 310

“ I forget not the gloom of battle,
Chief leader of bards from the first ;
Raise his stone by Lubar of hills,
A place for Foldath and his fame. 315
But dwell my soul on the times of heroes,
On the years in which they uprose
On the green warlike island’s waves.
Nor pleasant to Cathmor alone
Is Lumon, the people’s green isle-- 320
Lumon, the country of streams,
The sweet home of white-bosomed maids.”

“ Lumon of streams,
Thou art shining bright on my soul ;
On thy side is thy sun,
On the rock of heavy trees. 325
Dun are thy roes,

Thy great-antlered stag in the wood
 Descries on the moor
 The shaggy dog coursing fleet. 330

Slow on the plain
 Are the steps of maids—
 White-handed maids of harps,
 And bent bows on the field,
 Raising their soft blue eyes 335
 From bright locks to the hill of heroes.

Nor are Lear-thonn's steps on the mount,
 Chief of the island of green boughs ;
 He builds the black oak 'mid the surge
 In Cluba's haven of many waves— 340
 The black oak which he cut on Lumen
 To travel on the face of ocean.

The maidens turned their melting eyes
 From the king, lest he should go down ;
 They had never beheld a ship— 345
 Dusky rider of the great main.

“ The king now invited the wind
 Amid the mist of hoary ocean.
 Before him Innis-fail rose blue ;
 Suddenly fell the night with showers ; 350
 Fear quickly struck the race of Bolga ;
 The clouds cleared from Tonn-theine of rays.
 In Culbeinn's harbour lay the ship,
 Where the wood resounds to the waves ;
 Foamy in that place was the stream 355
 From the creviced rock of Dubh-uamha,
 Where the spirits of the dead shine

In their own evanishing forms.

"To Lear-thonn of ships came a vision—
Seven shades from the ages gone ; 360
Their sad broken voices were heard ;
Their descendants were seen in mist,
The stern race of Atha was seen,
And their children, chiefs of the Bolgs ;
They poured their own forces along, 365
Like mist rolling down from the mount,
When it travels grey on the blast
Upon Atha of many shrubs.

“Lear-thonn raised ‘The hall of Samhla,
To sweet music on the stringed harp. 370
Erin’s hinds from his footsteps fled
At their grey abode by the streams.
Nor did he green Lumon forget,
Nor white-handed Flathal of charms,
Who looked on the rider of waves 375
From a hillock of red-brown hinds.
Lumon of streams,
Thou art shining bright on my soul.”

In the east rose a beam of light;
The high mist-tops of mountains rose; 380
To be seen on the shores of glens
Were their winding grey-rushing streams.
The shield of stern Cathmor was heard;
Erin's race of the Bolgs awoke
Like a full sea when sharply rise 385
Stormy sounds on the face of heaven,
From side to side tossing the waves

And swaying their grey surging heads
Without knowledge of ocean's flow.

Slow and mournful to Lon of streams 390
Moved Suil-malla of gentle eyes ;
The maiden moved, but turned in grief,
With her blue eyes dropping warm tears.
When she came to the flinty rock
That leaned dark on her glen of Lon, 395
She looked, with her reason departing,
Upon Atha's king—she fell down.

“ Strike the strings, son of tuneful Alpin.
Is there joy in the harp of clouds ?
Pour on Ossian, whose sigh is sad, 400
Whose spirit is floating in mist.
Thou hast, bard, been heard in my night ;
But from me let the light strain pass ;
Plaintive wailing is joy to Ossian
In the darksome years of old age. 405

“ Green bramble of the spectres' knoll,
That wavest thy head in night's wind,
Thy sounding is not in my ear,
Nor is gleam of ghosts in thy boughs ;
But many steps take the dead brave 410
On the blasts of dark mountain-tracks,
When the moon comes forth from the east,
Like a pale shield coursing the sky.

“ Ullin, and Caruill, and Roinné,
Voices of the time gone of old, 415
Let me hear you in Selma's darkness,
Awaking the spirit of song.

I hear you not, children of music ;
In what hall of clouds is your rest ?
Have you handled the lightsome harp 420
In a robe of morn's mist and gloom,
Where the sun shall exulting rise
From the billows of hoary heads ?"

T I G H M O R A.

DUAN VIII.

As a fierce frosty wind 'neath gloom
Takes a moss-lake of the brown hills—
As it takes in the night with sound
The sharp ridges of the cold waves,
Spreading round a sheeting of ice—
White in the hunter's morning eye
The water of rocky hills flows ;
To his thinking the waves are moving
With a faint dull sound in his ears ;
But each wave in silence is shining
Under branches and red-tipped grass
That whistle and shake in the wind
On their places bleak under frost ;
As silent and pale were the people
As morn coming up from the east ;
Each hero, from his helm of steel,
Was looking towards the king's hill,
Fionngal's hill under clouds beyond ;

5

10

15

His great steps in mist were descending.

Seen at times was the mighty chief, 20

Half seen in the gleam of great arms ;

Battle rose in thought upon thought,

Closing densely around his breast.

It was thus the hero came forth,

With Luno's sword of gashes shining, 25

And long spear from a cloud emerging ;

Half discerned was the gleaming shield.

When he wholly appeared in sight,

With his grey hair spread on the wind,

And falling around under dew, 30

A great shout from the people rose

O'er the tribes all eager for battle ;

In their brightness they spread around

The king with their sounding shields.

Even so is the flow of blue ocean

35

Round a ghost from the mountain-heights,

When he comes in wind on the waves,

And the traveller far off, in fear

Raises above the brink his head,

To look forth on the troubled strait ;

40

While he fancies the shade is seen

Dimly among the roaring strife ;

The great waves swing round at his will,

Each dreadful ridge surging with foam.

Far off was Morni's son of blows,

45

Duthno's son, and Cona's sweet bard ;

They, each man of them, useless stood

'Neath his tree, forgetful of battle.

We kept from the eyes of the king—

That we failed in strife on the field. 50
 A small streamlet was flowing down ;
 I struck it anon with my spear,
 Though my soul stayed not by its side ;
 Rising wildly from thought to thought,
 I sighed from the depth of my breast. 55

“Son of Morni,” said the people’s king ;
 “Dearmud, hunter of the dun deer ;
 Why are ye so sad at this time,
 Like rocks on the shoulders of hills,
 With dripping black ooze on their sides ? 60
 My soul is not wroth without need
 With the mighty chiefs of the people—
 My strength in the conflicts of blows,
 My delight in peace after conquest.
 My voice was like a rising breeze 65
 At morn, when the deer were in chase,
 When young Fillan prepared his bow.
 That hunter is not on the mount,
 In pursuit of the bounding deer.
 Wherefore is the shield-breaking race 7
 So long as this down under gloom ?”

When our steps came up to the chief,
 His eyes were turned to Mora’s hill,
 While his tears were fast falling down
 For the blue-eyed youth of sweet converse. 75
 The light cleared his gloom in part,
 In presence of battle’s broad shield.
 “See Cromall of rocks under trees,
 The seat of wind, with head in mist ;
 Behind them, winding in the glen, 80

Is Labha of clear streams and deer.
 In the rock's brown face is a cave,
 On the height a strong eagle's wing,
 That is dark before spreading oaks,
 That sound in Clunai's mountain-wind ; 85
 The youth of brown ringlets is there,
 The son of Cairbre of blue eyes,
 The high king of broad shields and heroes,
 From Ullin of deer and great land.

He gives ear to grey Condan's voice, 90
 Bending down in light that is faint—
 He gives ear ; the foes of the chief
 Are in Tighmora of much sound.

He from time to time shall come forth
 In a shroud of mist to the deer. 95
 When the sun looks out on the glen,
 He shall not be seen on the hill,
 At the rock, or the sounding streams ;
 He hides from the Bolgas of chiefs,
 Who dwell in his father's first hall. 100
 Tell him that the spear shall be raised,
 When perhaps his foes may dissolve.

“ Son of Morni, raise up the shield ;
 Dearmud, raise Tighmora's dark spear ;
 Let thy voice speak, Caruill, who art hoar, 105
 Of great chieftains' deeds to their son ;
 Bring him back to Moi-Lena's side,
 The dark field of spectres and blows ;
 Here, alone, I shall fight the battle,
 In the glen of a hundred great deeds. 110
 Ere descends the darkness of night,

Come thou to the field of Dunmora,
 And, looking from the darkening knoll,
 Through mist that is heavy and dense,
 Towards Lena of big slow streams.

115

If my slender banners be seen
 At Lubar of gentle blue windings,
 I've not failed in the strife of heroes
 On the last field of dreadful war."

So were heard the words of the king ;
 The retreating chiefs never spoke,
 But, stretching in silence their steps,
 And darkening upon the hill's path,
 They, going, from their faces eyed
 The host and frown of sounding Erin ;
 They had ne'er before left the king
 In the middle of stormy shields.

Slow behind the chiefs, with his harp,
 Went Caruill of the hoary head ;

He saw people's death in the glen,
 And mournful and faint was the strain—
 Like a gentle breeze was the sound,
 That by fits comes in gloom on Lego,
 Round that lake of reeds that are brown,
 When descends on the hunter's brow
 Pleasant sleep in a mossy cave.

“ Wherefore bendeth,” said the great king,
 “ Cona's bard o'er a lonely stream ?
 Is this a time for grief and gloom,
 Sire of Oscar, who dwell'st not in rest ?
 Let heroes in peace be remembered,
 When the gloomy strife is not heard

120

125

130

135

140

In hard warfare round bossy shields.
 Then bend thou in grief o'er a stream,
 On which strikes the cold wind of hills ; 145
 Let thy soul in that time be sad
 For the blue-eyed stretched in the grave.
 But Erin advances to battle,
 Broadly wingèd, immense and dark.
 Raise thou, Ossian, with me thy shield ; 150
 I'm alone in the conflict, hero."

As a dreadful voice comes from wind
 To a ship in the green isle's blue strait,
 Striking amid the lonely deep
 The dark rider of great wild waves— 155
 Even so sent the king's proud voice
 Great Ossian to the strife with spears.
 In brightness he raised up his steel
 In the dark rayless skirt of battle,
 Like the moon's broad disk without shade 160
 In the edges of dark cold clouds,
 The moment ere rise ocean's storms.

High-sounding from the moss of Mora,
 Densely the winged battle rolled on.
 Stirring his great host was brave Fionngal, 165
 King of Morbheinn of dark hill-streams.
 Spread on high was an eagle's wing ;
 His grey hair round his shoulders fell ;
 His great steps were like mountain thunder.
 He oft stood, and while looking round, 170
 Fire was flashing from his raised arms ;
 He resembled a flinty rock
 In grey ice on the brink of burns,

When the forest sounds in the wind ;
 The streams flash on its face and brow,
 Spreading high their foam on the blast.

He reached the cave of Lubar's rock,
 Where Fillan, apart, lay in sleep.

Bran was lying stretched on his shield,
 A strong eagle's plume strove in wind ;
 Bright was seen in the heath beyond
 The hard point of the chief's long spear,
 That raised sorrow in the king's breast,
 Like dark whirling wind on a lake.

He turned on the moorland his steps,
 Leaning from his shield on his spear.

Quickly bounded white-breasted Bran
 With joy towards the people's king ;
 He came, with his look on the cave
 Where the hunter was stretched in sleep.

At early morn on the deer's hill
 The noisy chase was the chief's joy.

There was then the shedding of tears,
 From the king's great soul under grief.

As pours from the ridges of winds
 A rain-storm on the sides of hills,

Leaving a clear stream in the heath,
 While the sun gilds the upland peaks,
 And tops of green knolls under grass—

Even so came the dreadful gleam
 Of battle to the king of chiefs.

He sprang on his spear over Lubar,
 Striking to its full his great shield.
 The leaning and rush of the people

175

180

185

190

195

200

With all their sharp steel was to battle. 205

Erin without fear heard the sound ;
 Broad she moved her host to the plain.
 Dark Malthos was in the field's wing,
 With stern look beneath his black eyebrows ;
 And near him, shining in the glen, 210
 Was the bright beam of chiefs and bards,
 Hidala, who was always calm.
 On the hill was Mathronnan's frown ;
 His eyes looked askance on the foe.
 On his spear was blue-shielded Clonar ; 215
 Dark Cormar was there with great locks,
 That were bushy in the wind's play.
 Slow, from behind the hill of caves,
 Moved the king of Atha's tall form,
 With two shining spears in his hand ; 220
 While half his grey shield rose behind,
 Like a firebeam at night ascending
 On the dusky hills of cold ghosts.
 When he brightened all on the ridge,
 The people closed in raging strife ; 225
 The red lightning-sparks of their steel,
 Striking, floated from either side.

As meet in commotion two seas
 With all their waves chilling 'neath blasts,
 What time they are roused, under frown 230
 Of high hard-battling winds and clouds,
 In Lumon's blue strait of slant rocks ;
 On the brows of sounding high hills
 Is the pathway of darkling sprites ;
 Under blasts there fall upon ocean 235

Tall trees from the brow of each hill,
'Mid foam and the tossings of whales :
So rushed at each other the hosts ;
Now Fionngal of conquests, now Cathmor,
High-bounding abroad on the hill ; 240
Dark-falling was death on both sides,
Grey glimmered the conflict with steel,
Following the dread path of chiefs,
As they stretched their steps amid sound,
Cutting down the thick rims of shields. 245

By the king's hand Mathronnan fell,
Stretched prostrate o'er a rippling stream ;
At his side massed the moorland water,
Grey-leaping o'er his slanting shield.
Cathmor struck in Clonar his steel ; 250
He fell not with pallor on earth ;
An oak caught the locks round his face ;
His great helmet rolled slowly down ;
Tlathmin will shed tears in the hall,
'Neath her heaving, kind modest breast. 255

Nor failed I myself to remember
The long spear of the brave in battle.
The foe bowed in death by my strokes ;
Young Hidala was weak in strife.
Gentle voice from Clonrath's dark streams, 260
Why raise against a chief the steel ?
Alas ! not to meet in free hall,
In the strife which song would surround.
When Malthos saw prostrate the chief,
Overcome, darkness fell on his path ;
From both sides of a dark hill-stream 265

We bent in the sternness of strife.
 The heavens lowered down on the sea ;
 Voices broke from the wild wind round ;
 Every hill was sheeted with fire ; 270
 Dreadful thunder pealed from deep mist.
 In darkness the foe settled down,
 While Morbheinn stood powerful and pale ;
 I leaned o'er a brook of the moss,
 With sounds not a few in my ears. 275

Then was heard the king's dreadful voice ;
 From strife the sound of Bolga's race.
 Seen from time to time was the hero
 In his lightning steps, that were fleet.
 I struck the warning shield of sound, 280
 Stretching after Alnecma of hosts,
 As they wound through the shady glens
 'Neath a gathering of dense mist.

The sun looked in part through a cloud ;
 Down, in light, flowed a hundred streams ; 285
 The mist on the hillside was slow,
 On the faces of grey rocks flashing.
 Whereabouts are the mighty heroes ?
 By mount, stream, or tree of the height ?
 I hear the sound of cleaving arms ; 290
 Their strife is 'mong the curving hills,
 In the bosom of dark dull mist.
 Ev'n so is the strife of fierce ghosts
 In dark night on the hill of clouds,
 When they strive on the great strong wings 295
 Of wintry winds that cleave the storm,
 O'er the rolling and slanting waves.

I went on ; slow fled the grey mist ;
 Faintly shining they stood at Lubar ;
 Half leaning on his shield in shade,
 Was brave Cathmor at the stream's rock,
 Which took fairly the hill's fresh flood,
 That leaped from the grey tufted cliff.
 The king's stately steps were to go,
 But seeing the noble in blood,
 At his side dropped Luno's blue sword ;
 He spoke while his spirit grew dark :

“ Shall Borbar's son of free cups yield,
 Or will he raise the shield and spear ?
 Not in whispers, chief, is thy name
 In high Atha of dusky plain,
 The great hall of heroes and feasts ;
 It came like a breeze o'er the waves
 To my ear in the land of mountains.
 Come thou to my festivals, chief ;
 Heroes will be vanquished at times.
 No fire unto foemen am I ;
 The brave have no joy in the dead,
 Beneath their cairns of lonesome winds,
 Nor in might laid on earth in battle.
 I have knowledge to close up wounds ;
 On the mount I've culled the sweet tops
 Of each herb of the moors and glens,
 As they bent by the sides of streams,
 Beneath the cairns of lonesome winds.
 Dark and silent is the great chief,
 King of Atha of streams and friends.”

“ Beside Atha of darkest stream

300

305

310

315

320

325

A black rock rises under moss ;
 On its summit are straying boughs 330
 In the wild path of mighty winds ;
 Beneath its brow is a dark cave
 Beside a clear stream of great sound ;
 In that very spot, man of might,
 Have I heard the steps of my friends, 335
 When going to the hall of harps
 And shells without guile under song ;
 Joy kindled in myself, like fire
 In my soul, by the rock of trees.
 There in darkness let me abide, 340
 In the even glen which I know.
 Thence quickly shall be my ascent
 On the breeze that pursues the thistle ;
 Whence down I shall look without frown
 On Atha of mountains and streams." 345

" Why speaketh the king of the grave ?
 The hero's hue, Ossian, has fled !
 Let joy attend his soul on high ;
 Like a boisterous sounding stream
 Was great Cathmor, kind chief of friends. 350
 My years, son, are closing around ;
 They give warning in the king's ears ;
 They are taking from me my spear,
 Passing o'er without naming strife.
 ' Why subsides not,' is what they'll say, 355
 ' Hoar Fionngal from use in his tower ?
 Is thy joy in the wounds of strokes ?
 In the tears of heroes in grief ?'
 I myself, hoar year, shall subside ;

No pleasure nor use is in blood ; 360
 For tears, like the sky's turbid moon,
 Put the soul under waste and gloom.

When my side is stretched down in peace,
 Wild war's dreadful voice strikes my ear,
 Rousing me in the hall of kings 365

To draw without vigour my steel—
 I shall draw forth my steel no more ;
 Grasp thy father's spear, man of might ;
 Raise it up in the hottest conflicts,
 When the haughty proceed to blows. 370

“ My forefathers are on my path ;
 The eyes of chiefs are on my deeds.
 When I move abroad on the hill,
 On the field in shade are the hoary.
 My hand kept the feeble from harm,
 Pride melted o'ercome by my wrath ; 375
 Without joy o'er the fallen brave
 My eye looked around on the field.
 My fathers and I yet shall meet
 At the hall of fierce whirling winds
 In vestments of plenteous light,
 With eyes flashing slowly on chiefs
 And men without use under arms,
 Like the moon in a darksome sky,
 That night-fire collects round her face, 380
 Red-wandering o'er her pale brow.

“ Father of mighty chiefs, O Treunmor !
 Who dwellest alone in fierce wind,
 I give Ossian of blows my spear ;
 Hero, let thine eye have delight ; 390

I've seen thee myself on a time
 In no feeble radiance on clouds.
 Even so, shining full, be thy sight
 On my son when he lifts the shield,
 And thus thou'l't great chief be remembered, 395
 And thy actions of heavy blows,
 Although thou thyself art but wind."

He placed the great spear in my hand,
 While he raised dusky stones on high
 That would speak of his closing time, 400
 With their grey heads in moorland moss.
 'Neath a stone the chief laid his sword,
 And a bright boss from his shield's face ;
 While darkening under many thoughts,
 His words slowly broke from his chest : 405

"When thou crumblest, stone, into dross,
 And art lost in the moss of years,
 A traveller from far shall come,
 Whistling as he treads on thy dust.
 Thou knowest not, thou worthless weakling, 410
 That this is Moi-Lena's famed hill,
 Where the king yielded up his spear
 On the field, at close of his wars.
 Quit its presence, in part his home,
 Towards the close of war stoutly waged. 415
 In thy voice is no fame nor praise ;
 Thy dwelling is by a hill-stream,
 Thy years shall sink quickly in gloom ;
 Thou'l't not be remembered nor named,
 Worst man on the hill under mist. 420
 My fame is in the robe of heroes,

A beam of light to unborn time ;
I travelled abroad in my steel
To save the weak o'ercome in arms."

Kindling up in his own vast fame, 425
'Neath Lubar's sounding oak on the mount,
The king quickly stretched his great steps
O'er a pouring, roaring great stream
That rolled down from the hill in light.

Small green fields lay 'neath sloping hills, 430
The sweet sound of springs came from rocks,
Where the host's great banner was spread,
Which streamed on the cold mountain-wind.

'Twas the youthful king's guiding sign
From the wooded slopes of lone glens. 435

The heavens broke bright in the west,
From the sky looked the lowering sun ;
The chief saw the host on the hill,
Heard the voice of joy round his steps
Loud-breaking and spreading around ; 440
A bright gleam ascended from steel.

Rare gladness seized the king's great heart,
Like a hunter in his green glen,

After showers abate in the wood ;

A grey rock on the mountain shines, 445
A green thorn in the pass of cairns
Shakes its tops in the languid breeze ;
The deer from their pasture look down.

Grey o'er at the soft moss of caves,
Claonmal under age bent his head ; 450
Without sight were his eyes in mist ;
The great bard on his staff was wailing.

Close by him in her flowing locks
Was Suil-malla of chiefs, all faint
With lays of Atha's shielded chief

455

In the days of old that were past.
The sound of war had left his ear ;
Trouble checked his words in his breast ;
Slow sabbings in secret arose.

The spirits of spectres, they'll say,
Like lightning often strike his thoughts ;
He espied the brave king of Atha
'Neath a bent mountain-tree behind him.

460

“ Why has darkness come ? ” said the maiden ;
“ The sound of war has from us passed ; ”
At its close the great king will come
O'er the plain to his own brown streams.
The sun looketh down from the west ;
The dark mist slants up from the mead,
Spreading thickly upon the moors,

470

Mong rushes by the winding hills.
From the mist thou art coming, king !
See him stepping down in his steel.
Come from battle to Claonmal's cave,
Great hero, for whom is my love.”

475

It is the king of Atha's ghost !
With slow great steps, and form in light ;
He has fallen in the bed of streams,
That tumble from the rocks with sound.

“ The hunter it is,” said the maiden,
“ Who chases on the hills the deer ;
He steps not to the strife of heroes ;
His true wife, so young, his beloved,

480

Awaits, beneath the gloom of night,
 His return from the mountain-side 485
 With pillage from the brown-deer hinds."
 The maiden's bright eye, on the hill
 Saw the pale, fierce spectre go down ;
 Greatly comforted she arose ;
 He, shrunk to a third, sank in gloom ; 490
 The shade vanished dimly away,
 Slow-moving on the mountain-wind.
 She knew that the hero had fallen—
 "Erin's king of shields is laid low!"
 Forgotten to a third be her grief, 495
 Which throughout wastes the soul of age.

On Moi-Lena's side fell deep gloom,
 Grey streamlets flowed winding through glens ;
 Heard rising was the voice of Fionngal ;
 Fire blazed in a dark mountain-tree. 500
 The people gathered round with joy,
 With joy partly dark under gloom,
 Eyeing 'neath their brows the great chief
 Without soul to exult the while.
 Sweetly from the waste of lone hills 505
 The slow voice of harps reached his ear,
 Like the murmur of mountain-streams
 Far away in a rocky glen,
 And light on the brown sloping moors,
 Like a breeze on the dark-winged peaks, 510
 When it takes the man of grey locks
 At the turn of night under gloom.
 The sweet voice of Condan it is,
 And of Caruill with the stringed harp.

The blue-eyed chief at length came over 515
 To Mora of dull-roaring falls.

Strains quickly broke forth from the bards
 On Lena of rocks and high hills ;
 All the people sounded their shields
 'Mid the varying turns of song. 520

Gladness brightened in the king's face,
 Like rays coming down from a cloud
 On the verdant slopes of great woods,
 Ere rises the bleak whirling wind.

He struck the warning boss of his shield ; 525
 He quickly hushed the hills around ;
 The host towards the hero leaned,
 At their own land's voice o'er the waves.

“ Men of Morbheinn, here spread the feast ;
 Let the night pass over with song ; 530
 The darkness of thunder has gone ;
 The light is around on the plain.
 Ye, my people, are my strong rock,
 Whence an eagle's wing shall be spread
 When I stretch forth my steps to battle, 535
 Thus gaining to myself renown.

Ossian, my spear is in thy hand ;
 Its shaft is no lad's fragile stick,
 That scatters the thistle around,
 As slowly he steps o'er the field. 540

” Twas the spear, in their time, of heroes,
 Who stretched forth their hands unto death.
 Regard thou the sires of the brave,
 That like spirits shine from the sky.
 When greys the soft light on the sea, 545

Take Artho of hosts at thy side
To Tighmora of sounding waves ;
Put green Erin's kings in his sight,
Comely forms that raised fame of old ;
Not forgetting the fallen in battle ; 550
Raise strains to the brave on the field ;
Let Caruill give voice to the lay ;
Let heroes round their steps have joy
In morn's mist by the winding hills.
My white sails to-morrow shall rise 555
Towards Selma of trees and towers,
And great streams that wandered through glens
Among the haunts of deer in mist."

CONLAOCH AND CUTHONNA.

HAS Ossian heard a real voice ?
Or is it the call of past days ?
Oft in thought on times of the field,
Like eve's setting sun in a glen ;
Renewed is the sound of the chase, 5
With the dead's long spear in my hand.
Ossian rightly has heard the voice.
Who art thou, darkling son of night ?
Deedless children sleep amid gloom,
With the wind in their darksome halls. 10
The king's shield is sounding at times
On the breeze of high-frowning cliffs—
The bossy shield on my dwelling's wall,
On which I at times lay my hand.
"Tis right I should hear my own friend ;
Long mute has been the hero's voice ! 15
Why thus idly range on dark clouds,
Son of Morni of hardest strokes ?
Near thee are the agèd chief's friends,

Great Oscar of might behind shields ?
Often was the chief by thy side,
Conlaoch, in the wieldling of spears.

CONLAOCH'S GHOST.

Is there sleep for Cona's sweet voice
In the hall of high-sounding wind ?
Sleeps Ossian of the mighty deeds,
And the deep round his home in storm ?
No grave is in sight on the isle.
How long shall we be without fame,
King of Selma of sounding glens ?

OSSIAN.

Sad is Ossian who sees thee not,
As idly thou sitt'st on thy cloud.
Art thou, hero, a mist from Lano,
Or a meteor harmless on hills ?
Of what film is thy airy robe ?
Of what thy weak bow of the sky ?
He vanished on a gust of wind,
Like the shadow of passing clouds.
Descend from the wall of thy rest,
Thou harp of the mighty with sound ;
Let the light of memory rise
On I-thonn's mount compassed by ocean.
Let me see in action my friends ;
Ossian dimly shall see the brave
On the dark-blue isle under clouds ;
The cave of stormy Tonn appears

30

25

30

35

40

45

In the mossy rock of bent trees ;
 A stream murmurs down at its mouth ;
 Toscar is bending o'er its sound ;
 Ferguth is mournful at his side,
 While Cuthonn' laments far above. 50
 Is there wind on the surging waves ?
 Or hear I their voice on the deep ?

TOSCAR.

The night is under stormy blasts ;
 The wood to a third strews the hill ;
 The ocean flows dark under clouds, 55
 The roar of wild waves is around.
 The lightning of heaven flashed by.
 In the gleam of a phantom shield
 I beheld Ferguth without guile,
 The bad sprite that was strong through night.
 In silence he stood on a bank, 61
 While sounded his robe in the wind.
 I beheld with pity his tears,
 An old pallid man without strength,
 With sad thoughts coursing through his breast.

FERGUTH.

Thy own father, Toscar, it was ; 66
 He foresees the death of his race ;
 It was so he appeared at the time
 When great Ronnan fell under cloud.
 O Erin, of green grassy knolls,
 How beloved by me are thy glens ! 70

There is calm on thy blue hill-streams,
The sun on thy uplands is bright.
Sweet the strains of thy harps in Selma,
Clear thy hunter's voice upon Cromla. 75
But we are in far stormy I-thonn,
Dull and sad 'mid ocean's hoarse waves—
Wild waves that with white-crested heads
Leap over the receding shore ;
I'm trembling in the midst of night. 80

TOSCAR.

Whither has the soul of war gone,
Good Ferguth of the hoary locks ?
I've seen thee without fear of death,
When thine eyes beamed with joy on shields.
Whither has the soul of war gone ? 85
The true hero never has fear.
Go, look on the grey face of ocean ;
The wind is laid, mastered by showers ;
The billows are trembling in fear,
Lest the sun sleep shrouded in storms. 90
Go, look the great ocean all o'er ;
Morning is in the west and grey.
Heaven's orb shall look from the east,
Priding, like a man, in his light.
I unfurled my sails with delight 95
Under Conlaoch of chiefs' high hall ;
Steering to the havenless isle.
Bright Cuthonn', pursuing dun hinds,
I beheld like a gleam of light,

That with radiance comes from the clouds ; 100
 Her locks were like the night's black pall,
 On her white bosom rising proud,
 As, leaning, her bowstring she drew ;
 Her white arm behind her went down,
 Like the stainless snow upon Cromla. 105
 Come thou to my spirit, fair-hand,
 Rare huntress of the lonely isle.
 Her hours are with numberless tears ;
 She is thinking of mighty Conlaoch.
 Say, where is thy happiness, maid, 110
 Cuthonn' of the great heavy locks ?

CUTHONNA.

A steep rock overhangs the deep,
 Its grey trees are mossy with age ;
 The billows are rolled on its shore ;
 On its side is the isle of roes ; 115
 There rises the tower of my love.
 The maidens of the chase, from the mount
 Returning, behind him he saw.
 "Say, where is warlike Rumar's daughter ?"
 The maidens, chagrined, never spoke. 120
 "My peace is on the heights of Mora,
 Thou son of the far distant land."

TOSCAR.

Let the maid return to her peace,
 Unto Conlaoch's dwelling of harps ;

The hero is the friend of Toscar ; 125
 His great land for me had a feast.
 A warm breeze from Erin shall rise
 To waft her to the shore of Mora ;
 On Mora the maid shall have peace.
 Toscar's days are floating to grief. 130
 I shall sit in the sheltering cave,
 Thence to look on the sunny fields ;
 There is wind from clouds in the trees,
 And the noble bright maid is calm,
 Kindly Cuthonn' of the sad voice ; 135
 But far from my ear is the maid,
 In the festive dwelling of Conlaoch.

CUTHONNA.

What cloud is this on me that falls,
 Carrying my hero away ?
 I am seeing his airy robes, 140
 Like grey mist on the distant hill.
 Mighty Rumar, when shall I fall ?
 My heart's grief is causing my death.
 Shall I see thee not, Conlaoch of strokes,
 Ere lifeless I sink in the grave ? 145

OSSIAN.

Bright maiden, thou wilt see thy love ;
 The hero comes over the strait ;
 Toscar's death is darkening his spear,
 In his side is a ghastly wound ;

He is pale by the cavern's waves, 150
 There exposing his helpless form.
 Where art thou, maiden, with thy tears,
 And Mora's great chief nearing death ?

The pale vision forsook my breast ;
 I shall look on the chief no more. 155
 Ye bards of the times yet unfled,
 With tears in remembrance put Conlaoch ;
 The chief has fallen ere closed his day ;
 Sorrow filled with darkness his hall.

His mother surveyed on the wall 160
 His shield ; towards her the blood flowed.
 She knew that thou hadst fallen, hero ;
 Her voice was heard wailing on Mora.
 Art thou, maiden, helpless and wan
 Beside the brave warrior, Cuthonn' ? 165
 The night comes ; the sun shall return,
 With no man to lay them in graves ;
 Thou art putting birds under fear ;
 Thy tears are like showers round thy face ;
 Thou thyself art like a grey cloud 170
 That rises in showers from the mead.

Selma's children came from the east ;
 They discovered Cuthonn' all pale ;
 They forthwith raised up all their graves ;
 She had rest by Conlaoch of worth. 175
 Come not thou to my vision, hero ;
 For Conlaoch has received his fame.
 Keep far from my dwelling thy voice ;
 Sleep shall come with the shades of night.
 Alas ! to forget not my friends 180

Till my steps on hills be not seen,
Till I come with gladness to join them,
When, after my profitless vigils,
And all over marred with old age,
I'm laid in the cold narrow house.

185

THE END.



